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CONSTABLE OF FRANCE

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CHARLES DE BOURBON

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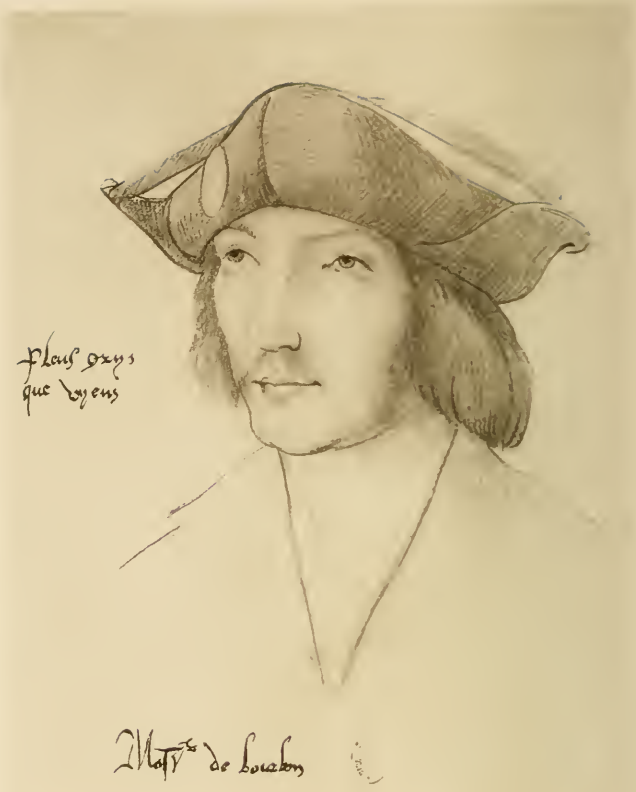
COURTS AND CAMPS OF THE ITALIAN RENAISSANCE

MARGUERITE OF AUSTRIA

QUEEN OF QUEENS AND THE MAKING OF SPAIN

LOUIS XI

ETC. ETC.



Charles de Bourbon
Constable of France

CHARLES DE BOURBON

HIGH CONSTABLE OF FRANCE
"THE GREAT CONDOTTIERE"
BY CHRISTOPHER HARE
WITH A PHOTOGRAVURE FRONTISPIECE & 16 OTHER ILLUSTRATIONS

LONDON JOHN LANE THE BODLEY HEAD
NEW YORK JOHN LANE COMPANY MCMXI

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INTRODUCTION

AGAINST the vivid background of the Renaissance, one figure flashes forth like a meteor, with startling distinctness. It is that of Charles de Montpensier, Duc de Bourbon, High Chamberlain and Constable of France.

Of the blood-royal, by direct descent from St Louis, Charles was so perilously near to succession of the Throne, that neither Louis XII. nor the Duke's early play-fellow François I., could ever forget or forgive it. This royal jealousy was destined to bear terrible fruit in the end.

The young Prince might well be proud of his Bourbon ancestors, who had played so gallant and chivalrous a part in the history of his country; who had fallen at Crécy, at Poictiers, and at Agincourt, ever foremost in battle against the foe. His father, Gilbert de Montpensier, had carried on the splendid record, having bravely fought at Granson and Morat against Charles of Burgundy, and continued his gallant career under Charles VIII. in Italy until, as Viceroy of Naples, forsaken by his King and overwhelmed by superior force, he refused to abandon his starving and plague-stricken followers, and died a hero's death at Pozzuoli.

His eldest son Louis followed in his steps and greatly distinguished himself in the service of Louis XII.; was wounded at the siege of Capua and died in the prime of his noble youth. His younger brother, Charles, thus became the male heir of the Bourbon line; a position doubly assured to him later by his marriage with Suzanne de Bourbon, the heiress of the elder branch of the family.

From his mother Chiara Gonzaga of Mantua, the young Prince inherited the warlike spirit and genius of a race of "Condottieri"; at the early age of seventeen he followed Louis XII. to the siege of Genoa and already showed signs of the courage and skill which were to make him so famous in later days. At the height of his greatness and glory, we find Charles de Bourbon scarcely second in position to the King himself; holding his own Court and Parliament in the Capital of his great dominions, and so splendid in his magnificence that, at the Field of the Cloth of Gold, Henry VIII. is said to have exclaimed: "If that noble were a subject of mine, his head would not remain long upon his shoulders."

The Duc de Bourbon was at the very summit of his pride and prosperity when he was smitten from his high estate, and there came upon him that great and terrible downfall—one of the most striking tragedies of history.

On the death of his wife, Suzanne de Bourbon, lawsuits were brought against Charles by King François I. and Queen Louise de Savoie; the subject was powerless against his soveregin, and by a legal

quibble, the great noble was deprived, not only of the vast possessions of the House of Bourbon, but also of all his personal property. This was felt by himself and his supporters to be a most cruel and flagrant act of injustice, and many historians have seen in it the vengeance of Louise, the King's mother; a woman scorned in her insensate love for the handsome young Constable of France, who had somewhat contemptuously refused her proffered hand. This point will be fully dwelt upon; but in any case the wrong and affront of his utter ruin so worked upon the proud spirit of Charles that, like another Coriolanus, he shook from his feet the dust of an ungrateful country, and accepted the dazzling offers of the Emperor who had long paid court to him.

To this act of rebellion he was urged by his greatest friends, and above all by the advice of his mother-in-law, Anne de France, the former wise Regent of her country, who had taken the place of a second mother to her Suzanne's husband. This may appear to us a rash and fatal step, but as his chroniclers point out, it was with him a question of life and death, as, once robbed of all his honours and his dominions, the next step would certainly have led him to the scaffold.

He had crossed the Rubicon, and with only his name and his sword he entered the service of the Emperor Charles V., as the last of the great "Condottieri"; he avenged his injuries and affronts in victory after victory, until the King who had wronged him fell prisoner of his bow and spear at the fatal battle of Pavia. Whatever the Duke's feelings

as conqueror may have been, there was no room for repentance ; as a rebel and outlaw he fought on to the bitter end ; pursued by implacable destiny he never flinched or faltered, but bravely played his life as a pawn in the game of the world's warfare. As Dumeril says : " Driven by circumstances into a desperate position, going he knew not whither, at once adored and disobeyed by his soldiers, commanding an Imperial army which no longer belonged to the Emperor . . . he became sacrilegious by necessity, and met his death at the moment when he went to plant his banners on the walls of the Eternal City. . . ."

Over few characters in history has a fiercer war been waged. His story was first written by the minions of the King he had defied, and we are reminded of the fable in which a mighty lion—represented as overcome by a single hunter—points out that it is *man* who has given his side of the question ! Thus in the mock trial held after his death, Charles de Montpensier, Duc de Bourbon, was first summoned to appear and then condemned unheard for contempt of court . . . ; so that we cannot wonder that the historians of the reign of François I. had no scruples in blackening the name and fame of the last great feudal lord, the splendid foe who had sought to avenge his wrongs on the gay, careless, untrustworthy monarch.

All these courtly accusations have of course been diligently repeated by various later writers, especially by the impulsive prejudiced Michelet ; although, in later years, a more critical and profound study of early memoirs and letters has produced a strong

reaction in favour of this great and most unfortunate Constable of France.

In the following study of his life, contemporary chronicles are followed as closely as possible, and of these the most interesting is the record of an eye-witness, Guillaume de Marillac, a loyal servitor of Charles de Bourbon and his father. His simple words bear the stamp of truth, and give us minute details of life in those far-off days, which bring the picture of the past vividly before us.

During all the later period, after the rebellion of Bourbon, his story can be closely followed from the very curious examination of witnesses at the great trial of his chief adherents, and above all from the immense collection, most fortunately preserved, of State letters, written by the Duc de Bourbon himself, by François I., Charles V., Clement VII., by the ambassadors at the Courts of these Princes, and by other men of note. Contemporary diaries, written during sieges and other stirring events, have also proved of great value and interest.

Of all historical documents, there can be nothing to compare in value with the letters written by the great actors in the drama of history. As Montaigne says: "Ceste recherche de la vérité est tellement délicate, qu'on ne se puisse pas fier d'un combat à la science de celuy qui a commandé, ny aux soldats de ce qui s'est passé près d'eux, si, à la mode d'une information judiciaire, on ne confronte pas les témoins et recoit les objets sur la preuve des poinctilles de chaque accident."

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CHARLES DE BOURBON

CHARLES DE BOURBON

CHAPTER I

BIRTH AND LINEAGE OF CHARLES DE MONTPENSIER—THE HOUSE OF BOURBON—THE HOUSE OF GONZAGA.

CHARLES DE MONTPENSIER was born on February 17, 1490. He was the second son of Gilbert, Comte de Montpensier, of the blood royal of France, by his marriage with Chiara Gonzaga, daughter of Federico, Marchese of Mantua. By his father, Charles was in direct descent from St Louis, King of France, through the noble and illustrious House of Bourbon.

His ancestor Robert, the youngest son of King Louis IX. and Margaret of Provence, born in 1256, received the appanage of the comté of Clermont, which then included most of the Beauvoisis, and the châtellenies of Creil and Gournay. Like most royal princes of the time, he greatly added to his patrimony by marriage, for Beatrice of Burgundy brought to him Charolois from her father, with the province of the Bourbonnais and the seigneury of St Just from her mother. Prince Robert thus became one of the most powerful lords of the realm, and left to his descendants the great name of Bourbon.

His eldest son, Louis I., Duke of Bourbon, distin-

guished himself in the war against Flanders, and was made Great Chamberlain of France by King Philip V. and Comte de la Marche by Charles IV., in reward for his valuable services. He married Marie de Hainault, and their eldest son, Pierre I., succeeded as Duc de Bourbon in 1341. This prince carried on the gallant traditions of his House, for he was wounded on the Field of Crécy, and subsequently killed at the Battle of Poictiers while bravely fighting by the side of his King, Jean II. of France.

A like splendid record was that of Duke Pierre's brother Jacques, Comte de la Marche, who was dangerously wounded in rescuing, at the Battle of Crécy, King Philip VI., who gave him the comté of Ponthieu. Later he was made Constable of France by King Jean II., with whom he was taken prisoner at the Battle of Poictiers. After his release, Jacques again distinguished himself in the service of his country, and fell with his brave young son, while vigorously fighting the brigands who devastated France in those days. He was known to fame as " the Flower of Chivalry," and his son and successor, Jean, Comte de la Marche, de Vendôme, etc., was the head of that branch of the Bourbons which succeeded to the title in 1527, and from whence descended the Bourbon Kings of France.

Returning to the direct Bourbon line : Louis II.,[1] son of Duke Pierre, distinguished himself with heroic valour and devotion at a time when his King and his country were in their hour of deepest need. Jean II., the Good, was a prisoner in England ; the peasants

[1] Remained as a hostage in England for his King during 14 years.

had risen in insurrection against the feudal lords who oppressed them, while these in their turn were in rebellion against the monarchy. Companies of banditti had seized the opportunity of ravaging the provinces, and the dauphin was threatened on every side when Louis of Bourbon hastened to his assistance with all the men-at-arms he could muster and, by his splendid example, rallied the nobility to range themselves under the banner of the dauphin, who was soon to succeed his father as Charles V., the Wise. Louis II., Duc de Bourbon, died in 1410 and was succeeded by his son, Jean I., who became Great Chamberlain of France, and Captain-General in Languedoc and Gascoigne. Duke Jean once more carried on the noblest traditions of the House of Bourbon ; he fought with splendid courage at Agincourt, where he was taken prisoner, and died eighteen years later, a captive in London.

Jean I. had married Marie de Berry, a great heiress who brought with her the duchy of Auvergne and the comté of Montpensier, which was settled upon her second son Louis, the grandfather of Charles de Montpensier, the hero of this memoir. The elder brother of Louis succeeded his father and became Charles I., Duc de Bourbon. He married Agnès de Bourgogne and had a large family of sons and daughters, one of whom married the Duc de Savoie, and from her was descended Louise de Savoie, the mother of François I., King of France, of whose claims to the duchy we shall hear later on.[1] Duke Charles was followed in

[1] See Genealogical Table, No. I.

succession by his eldest son, Jean II., who died without an heir, leaving the duchy to his brother, Pierre II.

This was the great Duc de Bourbon who was in such high favour with Louis XI. that he received the hand of the King's daughter, Anne de France, and was joined with his wife later in the Regency of her young brother, Charles VIII. For many years they had no children, and the heritage of the vast estates of Bourbon would naturally come to the cousin of Pierre II., Gilbert de Montpensier, the father of Charles, the subject of this memoir.[1]

This Monseigneur Gilbert had a splendid record of valour and distinction in arms. When only eighteen years of age, as Lieutenant-General of Louis XI., he had fought bravely against Charles of Burgundy and later shared in the victories of Granson and Morat. He served Charles VIII. with great success in Poitou and Brittany, and in 1494 followed him to Italy, where he greatly distinguished himself, and on the King's retreat was left in command as Viceroy of Naples, a barren title and a post of deadly peril in the midst of overwhelming hostile forces. The story of his gallant, hopeless struggle and heroic death will be told in due course, but this brief allusion will show how the noblest traditions of his race were carried on by Duke Gilbert, the father of Charles de Montpensier.

The House of Gonzaga

On the side of his mother, Chiara Gonzaga, the young prince could lay claim to a notable ancestry, that of

[1] See Genealogical Table, No. I.

the famous rulers of Mantua who, by their diplomatic wisdom and distinguished valour, had raised that small state to an important and honoured position amongst the ruling powers of Italy. Like the Medici, the Gonzaga family had risen from the people, not from the feudal nobility, and had taken the name from their native village, in the low-lying fertile country between Mantua and Modena. It so happened that Lodovico Gonzaga was chosen Podestà of Mantua in 1313, at a time when the whole land was torn asunder by the conflict between the Guelphs and the Ghibellines. Gonzaga appears to have joined in the conspiracy against the ruling tyrant of Mantua, Passerino de' Bonacossi, who was put to death with all his kindred on August 14, 1328. Revenge for an outrage offered to his wife is said to have been the Podestà's guiding motive for this rebellion against his Ghibelline lord, but he was acclaimed by his fellow-citizens as having restored liberty to his State. However this may be, he received the honours of victory; was at once appointed Captain-General, and the next year made Imperial Vicar of Mantua and feudatory of the Empire by the Emperor Louis of Bavaria. Thus it was that the Gonzaga family became hereditary rulers of Mantua, and under their broad-minded and paternal government, the city not only maintained its independence but steadily rose in strength and prosperity.

Amongst these patriotic princes, Gianfrancesco I., the fourth of his race, deserves special mention. By his command, the mighty Castello with its four massive

towers rose on the eastern side, above the chain of lakes formed by the waters of the slow-flowing Mincio. To him also were due the beautiful Duomo, and the bridge of San Giorgio, which spans the Lago di Mezzo in face of the Castello ; and it was this travelled ruler who laid the foundation of the great library of Mantua. He was succeeded in 1407 by his son Gianfrancesco II., who encouraged native industries, such as the making of cloth, and agriculture suited to his marshy domain ; also adding stone fortifications to the alluvial natural defences. He held a splendid court and had the honour and good fortune of entertaining the Emperor Sigismund in the year 1433, receiving as his guerdon the title of Marchese, which he handed on to his successors. After the manner of his race, he was a valiant condottiere, and was quite willing to hire out his services alternately to his two powerful neighbours, Milan and Venice.

Yet the newly made Marchese was no mere rough soldier, but showed a true love for art and learning, encouraging great men of every kind at his Court. He it was who invited Vittorino da Feltre to take up his abode at Mantua, and thus make it famous to all time as a home of learning and the most famous educational establishment of the Middle Ages. The Gonzaga princes and princesses became distinguished scholars under his teaching, and from all parts of Italy pupils of rank and distinction flocked to the famous Casa Zoiosa to sit at the master's feet.

Paola Malatesta, the wife of the first Marchese, herself a pious and gentle creature, must have brought

into the family a fresh strain of vigorous condottiere blood from the lords of Rimini. As was the custom of those days, she carefully brought up in her own palace, little Barbara von Brandenburg, the future wife of her son Lodovico, who succeeded his father in 1444. Perhaps in his reign, Mantua attained the summit of her greatness, for a General Council of the Church was held here by Pope Pius II. in 1459, when the Castello was thronged with noble guests from all parts of the world, and the Marchesa Barbara was "distinguished for her shining graces." A few years later, this capable and distinguished lady arranged a marriage for her eldest son Federico with Margaret of Bavaria, daughter of Duke Sigismund; and it was their eldest daughter, Chiara Gonzaga, who married Gilbert, Comte de Montpensier, and was the mother of Charles, the subject of this memoir.

Such was the lineage of the young prince who is known to us as the most splendid and flamboyant figure of the French Renaissance. Of kingly race by descent from St Louis through the great House of Bourbon, whose annals of courage, loyalty, and devotion glow through the dark pages of history, half Bourbon and half Gonzaga, Charles de Montpensier was also heir to the reckless valour and passionate love of freedom of the condottiere, the watchful diplomacy and the stately graces of the polished rulers of Mantua.

Chiara, Comtesse de Montpensier, the mother of "Charles Monsieur," was a gentle home-loving creature, brought up in that highly cultured atmosphere of Mantua where the learned teaching of Vittorino da

Feltre still held sway. After the death of her father, the Marchese Lodovico, and her mother, Margaret of Bavaria, she remained in the charge of her somewhat despotic grandmother, Barbara of Brandenburg, and as became a submissive maiden of those days, she meekly married the suitable bridegroom found for her.

This chanced to be Gilbert, Comte de Montpensier, one of the greatest noblemen of France, of the blood royal; moreover, a gallant soldier of thirty-three years of age with a splendid record of past achievements. We have interesting accounts of the long wedding journey under the care of Count Cristoforo Castiglione, his charming wife Madonna Aloisia, and a stately escort through Milan and Turin, over the terrible mountains by the old pass of the Mont Cenis; resting for awhile at Lyons to recover from such hardships, then slowly riding on across hill and dale until the princess reached her Montpensier home in the very centre of France. We read of a splendid marriage ceremony, which took place in the autumn of 1481, of the bride's reception at the Court of Louis XI., but we are left to find out for ourselves how the Italian girl of barely seventeen, amid all this state and grandeur in a bleaker land, pined for her beloved kindred and for her sunny home at Mantua amid its shining, misty lakes. Chiara was devotedly attached to her brothers and sisters (see Table III.); Francesco, who became Marchese of Mantua in 1483; Sigismondo, the future Cardinal; Elisabetta, soon to be Duchess of Urbino; Maddalena, who married Giovanni Sforza of Pesaro and died early, and the youngest of all,

Alinari, photo.

LODOVICO GONZAGA AND HIS SONS (ANCESTOR OF CHARLES DE BOURBON)
By Andrea Mantegna

Giovanni, who was only seven years old at the time of his eldest sister's marriage.

On a hill near Aigue-Perse we still see the ruins of a favourite castle of the Montpensier family, and in such an isolated spot, far from town and Court, we can picture to ourselves the lonely life of the young Comtesse during the frequent absence of Gilbert her soldier husband, who was so constantly engaged in the service of his successive Kings. Nay, we may even go further, and suggest that this somewhat " precieuse " little lady, afterwards so close a friend of her cultured sister-in-law, Isabella d' Este, had but little intellectual sympathy with a husband given up entirely to warlike and sporting pursuits, and that Chiara found French provincial society intolerably dull. We have no reason to doubt her wifely affection for the hero so often absent, nor her proper maternal love for the babies who came in quick succession, but we cannot fail to see the eager delight with which the Comtesse de Montpensier escapes from her feudal castle whenever the opportunity offers, and sets forth on that long toilsome journey across plains and mountains to the distant home of her childhood.

Thus when, after five years of married life, she pays her first visit to Mantua just before Christmas 1486, she enjoys herself thoroughly with her two sisters Elisabetta and Maddalena, in preparing a beautiful *festà* for the return of her brother the young Marchese Francesco. But unfortunately his coming is delayed, whereupon the three princesses combine to write him an affectionate letter, persuading him to join them at

least by the New Year. "Most illustrious prince and our dearest brother, we your three sisters, with the help of other kindly ladies, have made ready a most beautiful *festà* for Your Excellency, being assured that at this holy season you would not fail to make us happy with your presence. Now that we have news showing the vanity of our hopes, we are sorely disappointed and feel much distressed, being unable to enjoy amusement and pleasure in your absence, for in truth we count it a thousand years since we last saw you. Therefore do we earnestly entreat, by the gentle and brotherly love which you feel towards us, that you will come hither and bring us consolation in the New Year, and take part in the delights which we have made ready for you in this our *festà*, which will assuredly delight you and give us all possible joy. Your sisters and handmaids, CHIARA, ELISABETTA, and MADDALENA GONZAGA." [1]

This was the last meeting of the three sisters, and at this time the two younger princesses were already betrothed in marriage by the arrangement of their brother Francesco, their legal guardian. In the early spring of 1488, Elisabetta set forth on her wedding journey to Urbino, where she became the bride of the young Duke Guidobaldo, of whom we have heard so much as the chosen hero of Count Baldassare Castiglione. Maddalena was married in the autumn of 1489 to Giovanni Sforza, the lord of Pesaro, and her sudden death within a year of her marriage was a terrible blow to both Chiara and Elisabetta. How

[1] Quoted by Luzio e Renier—"Mantova e Urbino."

often their thoughts must have dwelt on that happy Christmas which they spent together at Mantua in 1486!

French Invasion of Italy, in which Gilbert de Montpensier plays his Part

At this time Gilbert of Montpensier was engaged as Lieutenant-General for Charles VIII. in Poitou and Brétagne, where the Duke of Orleans, afterwards Louis XII., had taken arms against the ruling government. When not engaged in actual warfare, Gilbert was constantly required to appear at Court, and advise the young King Charles in affairs of State, more especially concerning military arrangements. Yet we must not hold Montpensier in any way responsible for the ambitious dreams of his master, whose warlike ardour was set upon leading the armies of France through Italy to the conquest of Naples, which the royal youth looked upon as his rightful heritage. All the wise policy of his father, Louis XI., was set aside, and Charles only listened to the encouragement of his wild young companions and that of sundry Neapolitan exiles who longed to avenge their own wrongs. Louis, Duke of Orleans, whose rebellion had been forgiven by Charles, was most eager to promote an expedition against Italy in the hope of obtaining for himself the Duchy of Milan, which he claimed as the heritage of his grandmother, Valentine Visconti.

Other inducements were not wanting. As early as 1484, a secret embassy had been sent from Venice to

urge Charles to claim Naples, and at the same time to persuade the Duke of Orleans to assert his right to Milan. But this suggestion met with no success at the time, for the Regent Anne firmly carried on her father's policy, and declined to interfere with the constant disputes of the Italian States. The marriage of Charles VIII. with Anne de Brétagne, the betrothed bride of the Archduke Maximilian, whose daughter Marguerite was sent home after her long engagement to the King of France, brought matters to a crisis ; for a coalition was now formed against Charles to avenge so flagrant a breach of promise. Italy became the chief scene of intrigues, in which Pope Innocent VIII., Henry VII. of England, Maximilian of Austria, and above all, Lodovico Sforza of Milan took active part. But no one was yet ready for actual war, and for many months we hear of stately embassies between France and Milan, Naples and Venice, in which the astute Lodovico managed to outwit all his rivals and foes, and to secure the alliance of the French King. We have a most vivid account of the sumptuous manner in which Charles received the ambassadors of Milan on March 28, 1492, the propitious day having been carefully selected by Lodovico's astrologer. The Italian lords rode through the streets of Paris, amid admiring crowds, in splendid robes of brocade and cloth of gold, and were received by the King and Queen in the palace of the old Louvre. Charles was clad in a regal mantle of Lyons velvet, lined with yellow satin, while Anne de Bretagne was gorgeous in a gown of gold brocade and a short cape of lion skin with a crimson

satin lining. On her head she wore a black velvet cap with a gold fringe hanging over her forehead, and a hood embroidered with diamonds.

The ambassadors were taken out hunting a few days later, in the forest of St Germains, but this does not appear to have been a very successful entertainment, for they found the sport of a much rougher and more fatiguing nature than anything they were accustomed to in the glades near Pavia and Vigevano, and they complained afterwards that both the men and animals were " very savage in their ways."

During the ensuing years many changes took place in the affairs of Italy. Pope Innocent VIII. died in July 1492, and was succeeded by the Borgia Cardinal, under the name of Alexander VI., at first an ardent ally of the ambitious Lodovico, who seemed to have attained the summit of his hopes, when his niece, Bianca Maria Sforza, was married to the Emperor Maximilian in the following year, and he himself was promised the investiture of Milan. Yet this great alliance was really a source of danger, for it increased the suspicions of the House of Naples, and when Alfonso succeeded his father Ferrante as King of Naples, it was evident to all Europe that the crisis was at hand. Alfonso lost no time before conciliating the Pope and securing his alliance, and Lodovico " Il Moro " at last took the decisive step of inviting the King of France to Italy.

We have a very interesting account of the coming to Charles VIII., at Lyons, of the Signor Galeazzo di Sanseverino on this secret and important mission. On

the 5th of April 1494, he had a private meeting with the King, "disguised as a German, with only four attendants"; but the next day he entered the city in great state with a hundred horsemen, and was presented by Charles to the Queen, for whom he had brought magnificent presents of inlaid armour, silver flagons, costly robes, and horses of a famous breed. The "flower of Italian chivalry," Galeazzo completely won the young King's favour, alike by his feats of chivalry and personal charm, so that the mission was crowned with success. Two months later, the Cardinal della Rovere, the deadly foe of Alexander VI., also came to Lyons to add his entreaty to that of Il Moro, and the war against Naples was definitely settled. This is scarcely to be wondered at, when it so exactly coincided with the personal desire of Charles himself.

I have dwelt somewhat fully upon the various influences which combined to cause the French invasion of Italy, because in truth this was the beginning of the conflict—so long continued and renewed again and again—which forms the keynote of my story. Hinc illæ lacrymæ. Here we find the root of the tragedy set forth in the life and death, not alone of Gilbert de Montpensier and his elder born Louis, but also in that of his greater son, Charles, Duc de Bourbon and Constable of France.

Hostilities began in July 1494, when Louis of Orleans crossed the Alps, and his advanced guard combined with the troops of Genoa and Milan to invade the territory of Naples. He was followed in September by the French King and his trusted general, Gilbert de

Montpensier, who were received with great festivities, first at Asti and later at Milan, by Il Moro and his young wife Beatrice d'Este. But notwithstanding gorgeous entertainments, banquets and boar hunts in honour of Charles VIII., it is interesting to be told by Commines that, at Vigevano, the King "asked for the keys of the castle at night and caused his guards to keep strict watch at the gates." His father's experience at Péronne was still an undying memory.

Charles appears to have greatly admired the Italian ladies, and he sent his sister, Anne de France, a portrait of the Duchess Beatrice, whom the historian Godefroi describes as wearing "a green satin robe, the bodice loaded with diamonds, pearls, and rubies . . . the sleeves very tight and slashed so as to show the white chemise beneath, and tied up with a wide grey silk ribbon hanging to the ground. Her throat was bare and adorned with a necklace of very large pearls and a big ruby . . . her head was richly adorned with pearls and her hair hung down behind in one long coil with a silk ribbon twisted in it, and above she wore a velvet cap with an aigrette of feathers fastened with a clasp of two rubies, a diamond, and a great pear-shaped pearl. . . ." As an excuse for touching on such frivolous matters as a great lady's dress, I can only plead the example of the solemn old chronicler, Godefroi. But the young King's brief dalliance in that gay Italian Court was soon to be forgotten amid the stern realities of war.

We are only concerned with this campaign in so far as it has to do with Gilbert de Montpensier, and a brief

summary of events will therefore suffice to tell the well-known story. At first the most amazing success attended the French arms. Piero dei Medici, in sudden panic, yielded Florence and all her strongholds to the invader without a blow; Siena threw open her gates and meekly supplied money and provisions to King Charles who, in December, marched his victorious army into Rome and dictated terms of peace to the Pope. Meantime Montpensier had met with but little resistance in his invasion of the domain of Naples, from which King Alfonso had fled, leaving his son, Ferrante, in his place. On February 22, Charles VIII. was crowned King of the Two Sicilies in the Cathedral of Naples, and reached the summit of his triumph. From this hour the tide seems to have turned. All Italy was now filled with dismay, and a league was hastily formed by Alexander VI., Venice, Milan, Spain, England and Maximilian, to expel the French invader.

Francesco Gonzaga of Mantua was appointed Captain of the combined armies of the League, yet so much stronger were family ties than political feelings, that we find his sister, Chiara de Montpensier, taking refuge at Mantua in her loneliness and anxiety during that sad winter, while her husband and brother are at open warfare. She had no sisters to welcome her, for the youngest, Maddalena, had died in distant Pesaro, and Elisabetta was away in her stately home at Urbino. But a strong friendship had grown up between the Comtesse de Montpensier and her sister-in-law, Isabella d'Este, and we can easily understand

how the two wives of the absent generals would find a relief in sharing the long dark hours of suspense and uncertainty, when only uncertain rumours from the camps of France and Italy reached them from afar. Yet we can imagine that there must have been a severe strain upon their mutual sympathy each time when a messenger arrived with decisive news,—of victory for one anxious heart and defeat for the other.

It is true that, when Chiara arrived at Mantua in December after a rough wintry journey across the Alps, Francesco had not yet taken a decisive part against the French, although Isabella's warmest interest must always have been on the side of her mother's family at Naples, and her near kinsmen Alfonso and Ferrante, now defeated and driven into exile.

Meanwhile the French King awoke from his ambitious dreams to find himself in a most perilous position, with all Europe combined against him. Leaving Gilbert de Montpensier as Viceroy and general to defend Naples, with less than 10,000 men Charles hurried across Italy, to find a formidable army barring his passage at the foot of the Apennines, and the fierce battle which followed in the valley of the Taro, has been claimed as a victory by both sides. " God Himself was our guide and led us home with honour " says Commines, for indeed the French army escaped with arms and artillery, leaving the royal camp and treasures to be looted. Francesco returned to Mantua on November 1, as a triumphant hero, and celebrated his assumed victory with great rejoicings, in which his

wife and his two sisters, Chiara de Montpensier and Elisabetta, Duchess of Urbino, eagerly took part.

It is curious to realize such passionate affection for her home and kindred on the part of Chiara, a French princess by marriage, as would make her rejoice in her brother's exultation at the cost of her own husband and the land of her adoption. This is still more emphasized by the fact of her remaining on at Mantua while her brother took command, in January, of a Venetian army to make determined war against Montpensier, and help Ferrante in recovering Naples. The French garrison retreated to the citadel until, reduced to the last extremity by famine, they were forced to capitulate. Gilbert retreated to the fortress of Atella and continued the gallant struggle until the coming of Gonzalvo di Cordova, the Great Captain, brought it to an end. With heroic devotion, Montpensier refused to forsake his fever-stricken soldiers and find safety for himself, as he was strongly urged to do by his brother-in-law, Francesco ; he fell a victim to the disease and died at Pozzuoli on November 11, 1496. His widow Chiara was at Mantua when she received the sad news, and we are told that Isabella d'Este was very good to her in the hour of her bereavement.

It is difficult to understand how the Lady of Montpensier can have spent so much time away from her French home and her young family. During her fifteen years of married life, she had six children, three boys and three girls. The eldest Louise, was married when quite young to the Seigneur de Chau-

vigny, whose domains were near Poitiers, in the pastoral plains watered by the river Vienne. On the death of Gilbert de Montpensier, his title and estates were inherited by his eldest son, Louis, who was barely thirteen, and at the time when some few of the French fugitives brought the disastrous tidings, appears to have been with King Charles VIII. in his place at Lyons. The next son was Charles (afterwards Duc de Bourbon and Constable of France), who was born on February 17, 1490.[1] There were two more sisters, Renée, who married later Antoine, Duc de Lorraine, and Anne, who in after years was a devoted friend and companion of Germaine de Foix, second wife of Ferdinand of Aragon, and who died unmarried in Spain. François, the youngest of the family, became Duc de Châtelleraut, and was killed at the battle of Marignano, 1515.[2]

[1] The old chronicles call it 1489, as the year was supposed to begin at Easter.

[2] See Table.

CHAPTER II

CHILDHOOD AND EARLY LIFE OF CHARLES DE MONTPENSIER—THE DEATH OF HIS FATHER, GILBERT DE MONTPENSIER, AT POZZUOLI—DEATH OF HIS BROTHER LOUIS—CHARLES BECOMES COMTE DE MONTPENSIER—HE IS BROUGHT UP AT THE COURT OF ANNE DE FRANCE, DAUGHTER OF LOUIS XI., LATE REGENT OF THE KINGDOM.

THE most interesting account of the early days of "Charles Monsieur," as he was then called, is gathered from the contemporary chronicle of Guillaume de Marillac, the faithful secretary and retainer of his family.

These old chronicles are often quaintly naïve, for the writer having once had the courage and decision to take up the pen, is deeply impressed with the importance of his work and cannot take it too seriously. Thus Marillac begins with a long dissertation upon virtue and vice and the consequences of both, trusting most piously that "our faults may be punished here below so that we may escape eternal damnation," while he would have the reward of our good deeds reserved for another world. Such words and aspirations have a pathetic significance when we remember the tragic end of his young hero, "the very high and very powerful Prince, Monseigneur Charles," which his loyal friend and servitor did not live to see.

We are told that " from his birth the young lord had shown the most excellent nature and the best inclinations, and that grace which was a special gift of his, and those who looked upon him loved him at once. Hence we may believe that God had already determined that the said Count Charles should become Duke and lord of these domains, and this we presume from the special graces which he had above his brothers. Seeing that in the life-time of his brother Louis, who was about six years older than himself, there arose a question between the women who nursed and had the care of the aforesaid children. ' Une vieille demoiselle, qu'on tenoit pucelle en l'âge de soixante ans,' and who had the charge of the said Count Charles, then called Charles Monsieur, often said to him : ' You, Charles Monsieur will be Duc de Bourbon.' And she repeated these words many times on several days. Whereupon the nurse who had charge of the aforesaid Count Louis, replied angrily that she was not speaking the truth ; for, if the said Dukedom of Bourbon should come to the house of Montpensier, it must be Count Louis who was the eldest who should be lord of it, otherwise he would be wronged. But the aforesaid demoiselle replied boldly that she was of that opinion and would always remain so ; thus the dispute came before the lady Chiara de Gonzaga, their mother, who blamed the said demoiselle for what she had said, and afterwards privately asked her in secret what had induced her to make this assertion. The demoiselle replied that she believed it would be thus, without giving any reason ; and when the lady their mother inquired

what would then become of Count Louis her eldest son, she replied that he would become another greater lord, if he lived."

These words of the old nurse had cause to be remembered in later days. Thus we find that this eldest son Louis, when he inherited his father's title and estates, as a boy of thirteen, was full of ambition and courage, and eager to carry on the traditions of his race. Probably in gratitude for his father's gallant devotion, Charles VIII. made a great favourite of him, and was eager to assure his succession to the Bourbon estates, of which he was the male heir, by arranging his marriage with Suzanne the young daughter of Anne de France and Duke Pierre, of the elder branch. But death surprised the young King before he could carry out his plans; Louis XII. succeeded in 1498, and he was persuaded by the Duc de Bourbon to grant him letters patent by which his only child became the heiress of his vast dominions. This interfered with the rights of Louis de Montpensier, and listening to evil advice, the lad showed himself so indignant that, as Marillac tells us, "he hastily left the house and company of the Duke and Duchess, who had received him with so much kindness and caused him to dine at their table, and taken the greatest interest in his affairs." Louis left them without taking leave violently opposing the letters patent in Parliament, which so angered his uncle Pierre, that he lost no time in selecting the Duc d'Alençon as his future son-in-law.

When in 1501, Louis XII. sent the Sieur d'Aubigny,

as his lieutenant-general to recover the Kingdom of Naples, the young Count de Montpensier volunteered for the war at his own expense, as his chronicler says, "to exercise himself in arms and to follow the way of virtue." Having obtained the King's consent, this youth of seventeen "showed himself so brave, so noble, and so valiant, that he was amongst the first to lead the assault of the town of Capua, where he scaled the walls, and although twice driven down, again he ascended, and his enthusiasm carried the men-at-arms with him until the said town was taken by assault, and in consequence, the city of Naples and the other strong places of the kingdom surrendered to him. Nor after that assault and taking of Capua was there any resistance, and the said King Louis often declares 'that he held the kingdom of Naples from the said Count Louis,' and thereupon proposed to give him in marriage Madame de Foix, his niece, (since Queen of Spain), and to make him Viceroy of Naples.

"But the said Count Louis being at Pozzuoli, holding a service to the memory of the late Count Gilbert, who was buried there, took a fever which deprived him of life. . . . August 14, 1501. He might have married the niece of Louis XII. and become King of Naples, but at present we believe, seeing the good end he made, that he is a citizen of Paradise which is a greater dignity than being King of Naples. His body was embalmed and placed in the same coffin (plomb) as his father, and was brought back to France; and the father and son are buried in the Chapel St Louis, in

the town of Aigue-Perse, with the body of the good Count Louis, the father of Gilbert, who founded and endowed this chapel . . . and there was buried in the said chapel Madame Clara Gonzaga, wife of the said Count Gilbert, and mother of the said Count Louis, who died on June 2, 1503, and may God in His Grace deign to keep their souls in His Paradise, where ours may see them after our death ! "

Marillac also tells us that when Louis de Montpensier set forth on his fatal campaign, he placed his young brother Charles Monsieur in the care of his brother-in-law the Sieur de Chauvigny ; but as soon as news arrived of the death of Louis, Duke Pierre and the Duchess Anne of Bourbon wrote to the Sieur de Chauvigny, requesting that he would bring them the said Charles Monsieur, their nephew who, by the death of his brother had become Count de Montpensier. This request was willingly obeyed, and the boy who was barely twelve years old was brought to La Chaussière, where they happened to be then, and was received with much joy and kindly welcomed, as well as the small number of attendants Charles had with him.

An incident which occurred shortly after this, shows us what a very important young prince he was. The following Christmas when Philip, Archduke of Austria, wished to pass through France to take possession of the kingdom of Spain, he asked King Louis XII. for hostages who might dwell at Valenciennes until he had safely passed through the kingdom. This was the usual safeguard, and Count Charles de Mont-

pensier was sent in company with the Duc d'Alençon, and the Counts of Vendôme and of Foix. The young princes were treated with great honour and appear to have had a very good time together until their return to France about Easter.

From this time Charles Monsieur made his home in the splendid palace of the Bourbons at Moulins, and it is most interesting to see how completely the great Anne de France seems to have adopted the Montpensier children. It was she who had brought up the eldest daughter Louise in her famous "école de moeurs" for maidens of high birth, who had arranged her first marriage with the Sieur de Chauvigny, and who was now the self-constituted guardian, not only of Charles Comte de Montpensier, but also of his younger brother François Monsieur. The little sister, Renée, would be provided for in due time by the stately Duchesse de Bourbon, and Anne the second sister was under the personal care of the Queen, Anne de Bretagne. At this distance of time, it is difficult to understand where the mother's part comes in, and why Chiara de Montpensier who had so lovingly mothered her younger sisters, should apparently have passed away from the care of her own children. We find her in ill-health and depression, spending most of her time in the sunny climate of her old home at Mantua, where her eventful life came to a melancholy end on June 2 of this year, 1503. She was deeply lamented by her only surviving sister, Elisabetta the exiled Duchess of Urbino, who in her letter to Isabella d'Este, laments that, having been deprived of her dominion, her home

and her fortune, she has now lost the sister who had been more than a mother to her.

A few months later, on October 2, there was another death in the family of Charles Monsieur ; that of his masterful old kinsman, the head of his noble House, Pierre II. Duc de Bourbon. He had never forgiven the boyish rebellion of young Count Louis de Montpensier, and had apparently set his heart on the marriage of his little daughter Suzanne to the Duc d' Alençon who was in fact betrothed to her. But this was a matter in which his wife, Anne, had her own plans, and when young Alençon arrived with his mother in all haste, the very day before Duke Pierre expired, he found that he had to play his part in a funeral and not a wedding. On his return from Macon, where he had been to visit the King, the Duc de Bourbon had been taken ill with a fever at Cluny, but had travelled slowly back to his palace at Moulins, where he lingered for two months before the end came. We may form some idea of his splendid position when we learn that a stately procession of nearly seventeen hundred " officiers de sa maison," followed his bier to the celebrated Benedictine Abbey of Souvigny, which was for the Dukes of Bourbon what the Abbey of St Denis was for the Kings of France, and where Pierre II. was laid to rest with his fathers in royal pomp. After the fashion of the last Dukes of Burgundy and Bretagne, we thus see the Dukes of Bourbon appearing rather as powerful sovereigns than as vassals of the crown.

The proposed marriage of the heiress, Suzanne, with

the Duc d'Alençon had always been extremely unpopular in the Bourbon dominions. This young noble was looked upon as a "stranger," belonging as he did to a distant province. As Marillac says: "In the land of Normandy, the manners and customs are contrary to the gentler way of living in the land of Bourbonnois." It was not forgotten that the grandfather of Charles d'Alençon had been condemned for high treason and deprived of all his estates, which only the clemency of Louis XII. had restored to the present heir. His person, manners, and character would not stand comparison with those of Charles de Montpensier who was beloved by the whole country side, and it was looked upon as a special dispensation of God, obtained "by the intercession and continual prayers of all the Bourbon subjects, who made instant and humble request to Him," when the Duc d'Alençon was dismissed by Anne de Bourbon with polite excuses after the death of her husband. She pleaded her deep mourning, and the need of consulting a parliament of her subjects on so important a matter.

The Duchess was in fact of the same opinion as her people; this young Charles was the "heir male" of her noble race and thus his marriage with her daughter would keep all the vast possessions in the family, and as both his father and mother were dead, he would be entirely under her influence—an ideal son-in-law. The daughter of Louis XI. was no longer Regent of France, but she was still Queen over the House and dominions of Bourbon, and would prolong her reign as much as possible. We know how high

her record was to be in the annals of accomplished ambition,—she held her own for another twenty years.

We are not surprised to hear that Anne was a great match-maker in those days when a highborn maiden had no other choice than between marriage and the convent. During the winter following her husband's death she had another opportunity of exercising her good offices on behalf of Charles de Bourbon's eldest sister, who had lost her first husband, the Sieur de Chauvigny. Possibly at the suggestion of Charles, she was invited to Moulins at Christmas, and as she was a great favourite with her aunt (as they called her), who had brought her up, she ventured to use all her persuasion on behalf of an alliance between her brother and Suzanne. But the Duchess while most friendly, kept her own counsel on this matter; although she brought about a second marriage for Louise de Bourbon with her distant kinsman, Monsieur Louis de Bourbon-Vendôme, Prince of Roche-sur-Yonne. This took place with great ceremony at Easter, so that no time appears to have been wasted in romance or love-making, which indeed was quite unnecessary in the case of such noble contracting parties (as Anne writes in her " Enseignements ").

We have had the opportunity in the life of Marguerite of Austria, who for ten years was under the care of Anne de Bourbon, to study thoroughly the great lady's theory and practice of education in the case of girls. We shall now see with what success she devoted her talents to the more difficult task of bringing

up young princes,—the Montpensier brothers. Marillac tells us that she took the greatest care of the health and training of Count Charles, " causing him to learn Latin for several hours a day, while sometimes he went riding, or practised the use of the lance, or archery if he were so inclined. At other times he went out hunting or hawking, and was trained in all the occupations and pastimes to which great lords are accustomed. And in all this the said Count Charles achieved great success ; . . . and all things became him, for he was a young lord of most excellent nature and inclination, and who from his birth had so special a gift and grace that he was beloved of all who saw him. . . ." Each of the young princes had a special governor or tutor ; that of the Count Charles was the Sieur de Condé, and of François Monsieur, was Antoine de Ryom.

But Marillac's account of sports and pastimes is not very vivid and is plainly that of an old man, with his youth far behind. In very truth, young nobles in the days of the Renaissance had a glorious time ! Perhaps the most illuminating account of a boy's life in this period which has been handed down to us, is that given by Fleurange the " Young Adventurer," in his quaint chronicle. He was the son of Robert de la Marck, Lord of Sedan, of the family so well known to history as the " Wild boars of Ardennes." The boy was scarcely nine years old when he made up his mind to go forth in search of adventures and see the world ; now that he was old enough to manage his pony and to ride races with his companions. His father had just returned from war against the Duke of Lorraine,

and we can imagine that he was rather surprised at his little son's eager request that he might go forth on his travels, and visit the court of the King of France, Louis XII., "most renowned of all the princes of Christendom." Stranger still, we learn that the persuasion of the boy's mother won the day for him. Accompanied by a suitable escort, young Fleurange at length reached Blois where the King of France abode at that time. No form of etiquette was neglected; the child sent his ambassador to announce his coming, and the King who must have been highly amused, returned a message that his young lordship was to rest and refresh himself after his journey, and should have an audience on the morrow. The "Young Adventurer" thus describes the eventful meeting. The King received him most graciously and said; "You are most welcome my son, but you are too young to serve me and I will therefore send you to Monsieur d'Angoulême (later François I.) at Amboise, he being of your age and I believe that you will have good cheer together." Whereupon the "Young Adventurer" made reply: "I will go where it pleaseth you to command me, yet I am old enough to serve you and go to the wars if you wish it." To which His Majesty made answer: "My friend, you have good courage, but I should fear that your legs might fail you by the way; still I promise that you shall go, and when I set forth I will send you word."

The boy was sent to Amboise, to Madame d'Angoulême (Louise de Savoie), and was most kindly welcomed. Monsieur d'Angoulême (the future François

I.) and Fleurange were about the same age and appear to have got on well together on the whole. But we are told of an amusing dispute for precedence between them, when the King came down the Loire in his royal barge and two boys rode to meet him in the same litter. There seems to have been only one hole for exit, and the "Young Adventurer," who had arrived but two days before, contested his right to go out first, before the heir to the French throne! In his chronicle, written in later years (to beguile his imprisonment after the battle of Pavia), he looks back with the greatest pride and delight to his life at Amboise, as well he might. Never were games so heartily enjoyed as those which he minutely describes. There was a certain Italian pastime played with a big ball full of wind, and called, " à l'Escaigne," the name also of the instrument which you hold in your hand, which is somewhat like a small stool whose two feet are lined with lead, in order that it may be heavier and give a stronger blow. There was another way of playing this game in which the great ball was driven by a curious steel arrangement which fitted upon the hand and arm. In this, great skill and strength were required to succeed.

These descriptions are the more interesting as we find that Charles de Montpensier was frequently invited, with other young lords, to join in the amusements of François, the future King. Thus they devoted much time to archery, and became most expert in this useful war game. With little arrows, " à la serpentine," they took aim at a mark on a door to see who could hit

the goal. They also amused themselves in bombarding mimic castles, which were attacked and defended with the sword, and where very hard blows were given on either side. The ancient and original form of tennis, as played in the courtyard of a great chateau, was also very popular. But most delightful of all were the great hunting and hawking parties, which were carried out on a specially magnificent scale if the King himself happened to be present, when the huntsmen and the falconers assembled with the famous hounds and well-trained falcons, and the gay crowd gathered to the sounding of trumpets. "The young lords often amused themselves by trying various devices with nets and catapults to entrap stags and other wild creatures." And as they grew older, they had tilting and tourneys and every form of physical exercise to prepare them for the real business of war.

So much for the sunny side of life, but there were graver matters awaiting the young Comte de Montpensier. By the death of Duke Pierre II., the boy Charles had become the head of the House of Bourbon, and was the rightful heir to the proud title and vast estates. But the months glided away and Charles made no sign, although to assert his rights it was necessary that the heir should make his claim within the year. It was not until July 1504, the ninth month since the death of Duke Pierre, that a solemn meeting was called together by Louis de Bourbon-Vendôme, as representing the Bourbon family, and it was decided that he should courteously approach the Duchess Anne on the subject of his young brother-in-law's inheritance.

A. Giraudon, photo.

PIERRE II, DUC DE BOURBON, ANNE DE FRANCE AND SUZANNE, AS DONORS
Ghirlandayo? In Cathedral of Moulins

Madame listened most graciously and declared that she had the interests of her nephew as much at heart as those of her own daughter, therefore it would be well that wise councillors on both sides should be sent to Paris to consult with men of law and so settle the matter amicably. This plan was followed, and the question was found to be so complicated, that it was advised to place it in the jurisdiction of the Parliament of Paris, and meantime, within the year, Count Charles was to do homage to the King's Majesty for all the aforesaid duchies, counties, etc. With full consent of Anne, who lent him her magnificent silver plate that he might go to Court in proper style, young Montpensier set forth to join the King at Orleans. He was well received, but Louis deferred the ceremony of receiving homage for the present, it being understood that Charles had done enough to secure his rights. Thus was he first enmeshed in the tangles of that famous law-suit, which in after years was to be the bane of his life, and was not even ended with his tragic death.

However, in happy ignorance of the future, he took leave of the King and returned to the splendid castle of Moulins to continue his peaceable and happy life there, " in the highest favour with Madame la Duchesse, Madame Suzanne and all the great household and the Bourbon subjects who treated him already as their lord." Anne's chief anxiety was for the assured succession of her young daughter, and she had made up her mind to render it perfectly safe by the marriage of the " heir male " her nephew (as she always called

him), and the heiress in possession. This required most careful diplomacy, as Suzanne was still nominally betrothed to the Duc d'Alençon with the King's consent. However the daughter of Louis XI. was quite equal to the occasion ; she moved slowly and cautiously, and found that the King was perfectly willing to settle this troublesome Bourbon succession by the simple plan of a marriage alliance between the two claimants. The Queen, Anne de Bretagne, gave most valuable help, as she had always been friendly with Duchess Anne, and also because she was devoted to a young sister of Charles whom she had brought up at her Court, Anne de Montpensier, who was considered "one of the most beautiful, most virtuous and most accomplished maidens of the kingdom." (She afterwards became lady of honour to Germaine de Foix, and accompanied her to Spain, where she died.)

The King's consent having been obtained in January 1504, a carefully chosen embassy was at once sent to the Duc d'Alençon with courteous apologies for breaking off the marriage with him, and as it was by royal desire, he wisely bowed to the inevitable. There was now nothing to prevent the contract of marriage being drawn up and the needful dispensations obtained, for Charles and Suzanne "were second cousins, children of two cousins germain, and also Charles was the godson of the said Lady of Bourbon."

The betrothal was celebrated with great solemnity in Paris, in the King's presence by Monseigneur Georges d'Amboise, Cardinal of Rouen and Legate of France. Louis XII. clearly looks upon the marriage

of Charles de Montpensier and Suzanne de Bourbon as finally settling the vexed question of the Bourbon Succession.

The faithful Marillac sees the direct hand of God in this coming marriage which is to set at rest for ever all the disputes which have so long troubled the Bourbon family. Alas, for human blindness !

CHAPTER III

CHARLES BECOMES DUC DE BOURBON—HIS MARRIAGE WITH SUZANNE DE BOURBON—HIS STATE AND MAGNIFICENCE—HE DOES HOMAGE TO LOUIS XII. FOR THE POSSESSIONS OF THE HOUSE OF BOURBON—CHARLES GOES TO THE WARS IN ITALY WITH LOUIS XII.—HE DISTINGUISHES HIMSELF AT THE BATTLE OF AGNADELLO—HE IS SENT TO THE SPANISH FRONTIER—VICTORY AND DEATH OF GASTON DE FOIX BEFORE RAVENNA—DEFEAT OF NOVARA—ENGLISH INVASION—BATTLE OF THE SPURS.

THE marriage between Charles Comte de Montpensier, now head of the House of Bourbon, and the great heiress Suzanne de Bourbon was an event of more importance than many royal alliances. Louis XII. so fully realized this, that he caused the wedding contract to be discussed and drawn up under his own supervision, in a great assembly of princes, nobles of the realm, bishops and magistrates. An attack of gout prevented his personal attendance, but the Cardinal, Georges d'Amboise, represented him as president of the Council. These were some of the stipulations.

1. That Monseigneur Charles and Madame Suzanne should make to each other a mutual and general gift of all their possessions in favour of the survivor.

2. That the children who might be born of the marriage should inherit all the domains of the House of Bourbon.

3. That if there were no children, the whole succession should go to François Monsieur (the only brother of Charles), and to his heirs.

4. Charles de Bourbon assigned a jointure of ten thousand livres a year to his wife on the Bourbonnais. (Nearly twice as much as any Duchesse de Bourbon had previously received.)

By these articles, the King definitely renounced for himself and his successors any rights which the marriage treaty of Duke Pierre II. and Anne de France had given to the Crown, over the Bourbon domains, in case of the failure of direct heirs. On her part, the Duchesse Anne made her children a wedding gift of the Comté de Gien, the viscomté de Chatelleraut and of La Marche Inférieure ; besides securing to them in the future the immense possessions which she had received from Louis XI. and Charles VIII.

The great wedding took place in the ancestral home of the Bourbons, at Moulins, with more than royal pomp and magnificence, on May 10, 1505. The splendid park, spreading down to the fair banks of the Allier, was the scene of feasting and entertainment for citizens and subjects from far and near, while the banquets and tournaments for the noble guests were of unequalled magnificence. These were scarcely over when the young Duc de Bourbon, with Suzanne and her mother, set forth on a kind of regal progress, to visit and take possession of his great dominions. He was received everywhere with enthusiasm by his subjects, who crowded to see their new lord ; no " foreigner " from a distant province, but the heir

male of the noble race to which they had been loyal for generations.

Charles won all hearts by his handsome presence, his charm of manner and his princely generosity. Under the guidance of the capable Duchess Anne, to whom the talent of governing had come as her birthright, the young Duke developed more solid qualities ; wherever he passed, his abode became a Court of justice open to small and great, where he received petitions, studied to correct abuses, and distributed offices and favours with the utmost care and impartiality. The States of the Bourbonnais were so delighted with him that they freely taxed themselves to present their young Duke with a gift of a hundred thousand livres. This generous example was followed in the duchy of Auvergne, le Forès, le Beaujolais, the principality of Dombes and the comté of Clermont-en-Beauvoisis.

Without a careful study of the map of old France, it is difficult to realize the immense possessions of the Duc de Bourbon ; the last great feudal Prince. He owned entire provinces in the very centre of the kingdom besides other important positions and strong places on all sides. As Michelet puts it ; " He combined two duchies, four comtés, two vicomtés, and an infinite number of lordships and suzerainties. His strange and splendid empire comprised not only the great central and massive fief of the Bourbonnais, Auvergne and Marche, but most important outside positions ; le Beaujolais, le Forèz, les Dombes—three rings to enclose Lyons—the wild mountains of Ardèche,

Gien to command the Loire, then quite to the north Clermont and Beauvoisis."

Moulins was the seat of government where the Duc de Bourbon reigned like a real sovereign and held a brilliant Court. Here he was surrounded by the nobility of his provinces and lordships, who maintained a stately etiquette, lived at his expense, enjoyed his splendid hunting parties, his feasts and tournaments, and served him with feudal devotion. He had a numerous and well-armed guard; he raised taxes throughout his dominions, he assembled the States-general of the county, he nominated his tribunals of justice and his court of accounts, and he could raise an army in his own territory, besides maintaining his fortresses in a state of excellent defence. Of the Castle of Moulins but little remains at the present day save one huge square tower, called " La Mal-coiffée," but at the time of Charles de Bourbon we find it thus described by the Italian ambassador.[1] "It is a most splendid palace, built by the Dukes of Bourbon, placed in a strong position, with very beautiful gardens and groves and fountains, and all other allurements suitable for princes. In part of the grounds many rare animals and birds are kept, and amongst these we noticed many herons and Indian turkeys and golden pheasants and a variety of parrots of every kind. . . ."

Marillac dwells with supreme content and admiration upon the young Prince's life in those palmy days. He is never weary of telling us how Charles devotes himself assiduously to all that concerns his govern-

[1] Andrea Navagero.

ment, how he takes heed to " Madame sa tante," and learns wisdom from her advice ; then when the council is over, he wastes no time but turns to every active and warlike exercise which will fit him for the future. The air is full of joyous stir and movement ; we seem to behold the gay cavalcade of young nobles riding forth through the castle gates of Moulins to follow the chase in the forest or to go a-hawking in the low-lying river meadows. We know that the Duchess Anne herself was no mean huntress, and that she was even devoted to the chase of the wild boar, the wolf and the stag. " Anne chassait comme elle faisait tout, froidement et méthodiquement ; elle verifiait de ses yeux la piste (the trail), elle ordonnait l'attaque, puis elle partait avec les chiens, et tout d'un coup elle s'échauffait, s'animait, criait, donnait fort bien son coup d'épieu." In her " Enseignements " she encourages active exercise for girls, and we can well imagine the young Duchesse Suzanne riding out on occasion by her husband's side to enjoy the mild excitement of a quiet hunting day near home. She was a fragile little creature, unattractive and somewhat lame ; but very sweet and gentle in disposition, resembling in many ways that saintly creature, her aunt Jeanne de France, the unhappy first wife of her cousin Louis XII.

We are told that Charles was an exemplary husband, always showing a kindly affection to his young wife who was a year younger than himself, and who was devoted to him. There is a most interesting memento of their early married life, in the sumptuous Manuscript

volume of the "Enseignements" which Anne de Bourbon wrote for her daughter. This is at present in the Royal Library of St Petersburg, and appears to have been given as a New Year's gift to Suzanne in January 1505, just before her marriage. On the fly-leaf is written: "Ce livre est à moy, Suzanne de Bourbon, et l'ey eu de la meson de Bourbon." Some verses follow below, which M. Chazaud, the Archivist of Moulins does not hesitate to attribute to Charles de Bourbon. On the second fly-leaf the initials of Charles and Suzanne are interwoven between two palms, various other signs and a Latin motto: "Quocumque vergat sol previus ero" (Where the sun darts its rays, I will await them on the way). Below this is written the line:

"Je paye en ce lieu l'interêt du plaisir."

The first page of the illuminated manuscript is quite filled on the right hand side with portraits of the two Princesses, Suzanne and her mother, engaged in some pious reading, while the ladies of their suite are grouped together behind them in the far end of the hall. On the opposite page we find a part of the ducal escutcheon of Bourbon, in azure with three fleurs-de-lis placed two and one, then a band of gules, and a quartering in the 1st and 4th of Bourbon, and in the 2nd and 3rd of France; which is properly speaking the escutcheon of Anne de France. Amongst other ornaments in the volume, we see the name of Suzanne with the motto, "Espérance," which had long been that of the House of Bourbon. In the history of this precious volume, it has been traced

amongst the books seized in 1527 from the great library of Moulins belonging to the Constable of Bourbon, and placed by François I. at Fontainebleau. It is believed to have passed later into the hands of Diana of Poitiers.

When in 1505, Louis XII., notwithstanding his wife's opposition, succeeded in betrothing his daughter Claude to François d'Angoulême, the heir to the throne, there were splendid festivities held at Tours, to which Charles Duc de Bourbon and his Duchesse were invited. They travelled thither in magnificent style, with an escort of horse-guards and archers perfectly mounted and equipped, and surrounded by the principal officers and the nobles of their provinces. After the ceremony of betrothal, there were jousts and tournaments held, surpassing what had ever been seen in France before, all the princes and nobility of the kingdom being assembled together. "And the said Duke Charles was mounted, and equipped from head to foot, as became so great a prince, with a countenance full of valour, courtesy, and majesty, and he carried off the prize from all the great lords, being not yet seventeen years of age, and after the festivities were over, the said Lady and the said Sieur returned to their own country."

Yet such peaceful triumphs were but tame achievements for a youth of so much spirit and ambition, and he welcomed with delight his first opportunity of seeing real warfare, when the following Easter, 1507, he was invited by Louis XII. to join his expedition to Italy. Charles lost no time in making preparations

A. Giraudon, photo.

ISABELLA D'ESTE, AUNT OF CHARLES DE BOURBON
By Leonardo da Vinci. (Charcoal drawing)

on a princely scale ; a hundred men-at-arms, with the same number of archers of his household, a great supply of war-horses, arms, camp requirements, and munitions of war, all at his own expense. He held his own in fine style during the journey, " keeping open house both in the towns and in the camp, welcoming at his table such great soldiers as La Trémouille, La Palisse, Bayard, Louis d'Ars, and d'Alègre." He was never weary of discussing with them the great art of war ; plans of campaigns, of marches and encampments, every detail of sieges, surprises, and the most complicated tactics of warfare, were grasped by the eager young prince with keen interest and understanding far beyond his years. Marillac tells us that he listened with modesty to men wiser than himself, that he made notes of all that he heard, and never forgot the teaching which was to make of him a great general.

The French army, having crossed into Italy over the mountains of Dauphiny, soon put down the rebellion of Genoa, which surrendered at discretion, and when the French King paid a triumphal visit to Milan, Isabella d'Este, who was there, mentions that in close attendance on His Majesty was the " Duc de Bourbon, our nephew, a tall youth of handsome and majestic appearance, who closely resembles his mother (Chiara Gonzaga, Comtesse de Montpensier) in complexion, eyes, and features."

Charles was taken ill with a tertian fever, to which he was often subject later, and after his recovery at Siena, he returned home through Savoy, where he was hospitably entertained by his cousin, Monseigneur

Charles, in his palace at Chambéry. Bourbon visited the King at Lyons in passing, and then joined his wife and her mother, who were in their beautiful Castle of Chantelle. The following summer appears to have been spent in once more going the round of his great provinces in company with the Duchesse Anne: "to find out if any wrongs had been done, in order to repair them, and to see that order and justice reigned in his land. He assembled the States-general to hear the complaints from men of low degree who had been unjustly treated by the great or by his own officers, in order that punishment might fall on those who deserved it; for he wished to preserve his subjects from all exactions even of his own judges and agents—for such misdeeds are a burden upon the conscience of the seigneur who suffers them." What a paragon of virtue this young duke must have been for the times in which he lived!

Charles de Bourbon had come home from his first campaign a gallant young soldier; he returned to Italy in 1509 prepared to take his place as a general. Louis XII. had taken arms in the war of the League of Cambray, and joined Pope Julius II., the Emperor, the King of Spain, and others, against the Republic of Venice, that proud "Queen of the Adriatic," whose ambition and success had set all her neighbours against her. Maximilian reclaimed Verona, Vicenza, and Padua; Ferdinand the Catholic demanded Brindisi, Otranto, and Gallipoli; Louis XII. claimed the Ghiara d' Adda, Cremona, Bresse, and Bergamo; the King of Hungary wanted Dalmatia; and the Pope felt that he had more at stake than any of them, and sought to

regain Faenza, Rimini, Ravenna, and Cervi. Venice had no friends, and hatred made her enemies form an alliance against her.

The French troops assembled at Lyons. They amounted to about 12,000 horse-soldiers and 20,000 infantry. The young Duc de Bourbon had brought his archers and men-at-arms as before, and the King was so well content with him that he placed this young prince of eighteen in command of his 200 "pensionnaires" (men of the reserve), great lords and important personages, each of whom had ten, fifteen, or twenty men in attendance on him; this forming a troop of more than a thousand fighting men. At the head of this formidable army, with the finest band of artillery which had ever taken the field, Louis XII. himself crossed the mountains and began hostilities against Venice before his allies were ready. He left Milan at the beginning of May 1509, and advanced against the Venetian army, which was led by two condottieri, Pitigliano and Alviano, who did not agree very well together. There had been some desultory fighting on the banks of the Adda, but the policy of the Signoria of Venice was to avoid a set battle and tire out the foe by a kind of guerilla warfare. When the French army arrived in force, however, Alviano had no choice, and began an attack on the advance guard, which had been entrusted to the Sieur de Chaumont, Governor of Milan, and Trivulzio. The King himself, according to traditional custom, was in command of the centre, with all the *élite* of his kingdom, and the rear-guard was under the orders of the Sieur de Dunois.

Charles de Bourbon was on the wing of the army with the "pensionnaires,"[1] and amongst them were famous men of war, whom he treated as his staff officers and took into his counsel, for the King had left it entirely to his discretion whether he should see fit at any time to break in. Therefore, when the first violent attack of the Venetians caused the advance guard to give way and retreat, while the centre wavered and was driven back on the rear, the Duc de Bourbon and those with him, seeing how disastrous this sudden check might be—even causing the battle to be lost—advanced in full force, and breaking in at the side, dashed with such great fury and steadfastness into the midst of the Venetians, that, broken and scattered, they gave way. This restored courage to the Sieur de Chaumont and his troop, who returned at full gallop against the advance guard, who fell apart in confusion, and at length took to flight. Bartolommeo Alviano and other providatore and men of note amongst the Venetian army were taken prisoners, their army was defeated, and their munitions and artillery lost. It is very difficult to fix the exact number of the slain of the vanquished army, but the lowest estimate gives 6000 men. In any case such was the battle of Agnadello, so-called from the little village near, and those who were present assert that the victory was in great measure due to the presence of mind and splendid valour of the young Duc de Bourbon. The King

[1] Soldiers of the King's household, who formed a body of troops, taking part in Court ceremonies, and in time of war joining the army.

continued his victorious course, conquered all the country as far as the Lake of Garda, and sent the keys of Verona, Vicenza, and Padua to the Emperor Maximilian. He afterwards caused a chapel to be built on the battle-field, dedicated to Ste Marie de la Victoire.

This defeat was a terrible disaster for Venice, and the proud Republic lost in a day all that it had taken 800 years of strenuous labour and watchful devotion to build up; but we are only concerned with this important campaign in so far as France and the Duc de Bourbon are concerned.

The return of Charles to France was once more delayed by fever, but when he came home to the Bourbonnais, it was "full of fame and glory, and in high repute with all those who had served under arms with him." But Marillac complains that although the Duke had been put to so great expense—of more than 60,000 livres—yet he received from the King no pay or compensation whatever, although many other princes were given rewards and estates. It may strike us that Charles was too great and magnificent a prince to require any payment for his services, and that he possibly felt he was fighting for his King on terms approaching equality! For was he not himself appreciably near the throne of France, one of the first princes of the blood-royal, with only the Duc d'Alençon (so recently under hereditary attainder for high treason) between himself and the succession?

During the following year the young Duke was in

close attendance upon the King either at Blois, Paris, and other places, where he took his part in all Court ceremonies and entertainments, enjoying the highest favour both of Louis XII. and his Queen, Anne de Bretagne. Meantime Pope Julius had become alarmed at the predominance of the French in Italy, and was secretly conspiring against them. A bishop of Provence having died at Rome, the Pope at once disposed of his bishopric without awaiting nomination of the King, who first complained, and then retaliated by seizing the revenues possessed in the Duchy of Milan by ecclesiastics residing in Rome. Thereupon Julius treacherously instigated an attack upon Milan by the Swiss but, by a curious scruple, Louis hesitated before beginning actual hostilities against the Head of the Church. This dangerous delay was caused by the influence of his pious wife, who seriously feared that eternal damnation would follow upon such sacrilege. The same feeling was most inappropriately shared by Chaumont, the governor of Milan, who before his death entreated the conquering Julius to grant him absolution for having fought against his Pope! Fortunately the clergy of France had a more patriotic spirit, and they raised a free gift of 240,000 livres for the King, to persuade him that national questions were to be considered before spiritual interests.

Prompt action was necessary, for Julius II. was already advancing upon Mirandola. In the "Chronique de Bayart," by "le Loyal Serviteur," we have a most exciting account of the "Good Knight's"

defence of the Duchy of Ferrara, and of his ambuscade, which the Pope so narrowly escaped by the coming of a snowstorm, otherwise we are naively told: "encore le temps d'un *Pater Noster* et le pape était croqué." Soon after, Trivulzio retook Mirandola and Bologna, and won the victory of Casalecchio, in which Baldassare Castiglione was put to rout and his camp looted. Julius was driven back to his own frontier, but Louis XII. again had scruples, and sent word to his maréchal to stay the pursuit, although he had sent out Charles of Bourbon and Dunois to command the Italian army. It must have been a terrible disappointment to them to find that they had arrived too late: the war was over, and there was nothing for them but to return home. Unfortunately the young Duke was again taken ill with fever, to which he seems very subject, and he was ill at Moulins during the whole of the autumn and winter following.

In the spring Charles again joined the King at Blois, where there came tidings that the English had made a descent into Bretagne, and also into Guyenne towards Bayonne: their plan was to join the Spaniards and to march with them upon Bordeaux. As the King's army was scattered about in Italy and elsewhere at that time, Louis requested the Duc de Bourbon to raise 400 men-at-arms in his domain, and to unite his troop with that of Dunois at Bordeaux. He was Lieutenant of the county, and had an army of 3000 men-at-arms, 30,000 foot-soldiers, and 1500 lances. It was decided to march against the Castle of Montialous, and then to attack St-Jean-Pié-du-Port,

but on their way they found an army of 10,000 men awaiting them. Bourbon pressed Dunois to order the attack at once, pointing out the immense advantages on their side, but the commander hesitated, and Charles took upon himself to send a reinforcement of fifty lances, under the command of his young brother, François Monsieur, as the advance guard was already engaged and in great danger. Upon this the Spaniards promptly retired, as they believed the whole French army was upon them, but Dunois opposed any pursuit' and so they escaped in safety. This began a *gour-goût* (misunderstanding) between the two leaders, and the more so as Bourbon was thwarted in his wish to storm St-Jean-Pié-du-Port, which he declared would have been quite easy with the excellent French artillery, and the bad state of the ramparts and defences of the town. Moreover, although the Duke of Alva was at the head of the garrison, no help could reach them from without, as the passes across the mountains of Navarre were well guarded.

In the end the opportunity was lost: the French army wasted months in inaction, and at length, when the siege of Pamplona was attempted, the attacking party had lost heart and were short of provisions, so that they were driven back, and the season being now far advanced, this futile war came to an end, having been nothing but one long skirmish. It was close upon Christmas when Charles reached Moulins, where he was joyfully welcomed by his wife and the Duchess Anne. His sister Louise, the Princess of La Roche-sur-Yon,

came to visit him, and they all spent the winter together with much festivity (" faisant bonne chère ").

In March the King sent for Charles to join in a council of war with regard to Italy. Here the campaign had been disastrous on the whole, notwithstanding the splendid exploits of the gallant young hero, Gaston de Foix. His short and brilliant career has made him famous for all time. We remember how he drove the Swiss from Milan, saved Bologna, which was besieged by Giovanni dei Medici and Ramon de Cordova, entering the beleaguered city by night in a blizzard of snow,—how he crossed in haste the rivers in flood to rush to the assault of Brescia, where Bayard was wounded, but which was taken and sacked. On Easter Day, 1512, Gaston crowned his success by a triumphant victory under the walls of Ravenna, but paid for it with his life, beneath the shadow of those funereal pines. From that fatal hour the tide of conquest turned, and the French army met with nothing but disaster. La Palisse, who succeeded Gaston de Foix in command, lost all the fruits of victory. The Pope regained Bologna, Parma and Piacenza, and won back the Duke of Ferrara to his old allegiance ; Romagna was given up ; Venice once more entered into possession of the Ghiarra d'Adda, revolted Genoa chose her own Doge, Ottaviano Fregosa ; while the Swiss brought back to Milan, Maximilian the young son of Lodovico Sforza, and took possession of Chiavenna, Locarno and the Valtelline Alps. Recalled by Louis XII. when all hope was at end, the soldiers of France once more crossed the Alps on their sad homeward way, demand-

ing with impatient zeal why the Duc de Bourbon had not been sent to command and lead them once more to victory ? But the King made no response. Charles was too successful, too much beloved, too great and magnificent altogether, and too near the throne itself, not to have aroused feelings of jealousy which were carefully fanned at Court by his many rivals.

The enemies of Bourbon have accused him of refusing, in that moment of despair, to take up a forlorn hope. But the true story reveals a piece of duplicity on the part of the King. The treasurer Robertet was sent to make Charles a secret offer of 800 lances and 7000 infantry with a small band of artillery, to cross the mountains and regain Italy. The young Duke was dismayed at such a suggestion, for so absurdly small a force against the armies of all Europe could only court disaster, and he pointed out that it was impossible for him to accept such a charge. Meantime he took advantage of his leisure to make a pilgrimage to Nôtre-Dame du Puy-en-Veley, in fulfilment of a vow.

On the 21st of February 1513, the warlike Pope Julius died, and was succeeded by the Cardinal dei Medici, under the name of Leo X. The moment seemed propitious for another effort, and Louis XII. sent a large army under La Trémouille and Trivulzio, which met with some measure of success in the Milanese, and would have taken Novara but for the impetuous valour of the Swiss who, after a breach had been made in the walls, rushed out, took possession of the artillery, turned it against the French, and are

said to have killed 10,000 men. By this fatal defeat of Novara, Italy was lost once more, and the French leaving their baggage and artillery behind hastily retreated across the Mont Cénis, they and their horses, " bien las, et bien foulis et gâtés." It was an evil hour for France. The splendid reign of Louis XII. was drawing to a close in misfortune and trouble. On June 30, 1513, Henry VIII. landed at Calais, and joined by Maximilian, won in August the battle of Guinegaste, the " journée dite des Éperons," a name which the French indignantly disown. They tell us that their troops were only sent to bear provisions to the besieged city of Thérouanne, with the order not to fight, but in case of attack, to " retreat at a foot's pace, then at a trot and finally at a gallop, in order to risk nothing." This they apparently did. Thérouanne and Tournay were taken, and Louis began to negotiate with the Emperor, offering his daughter, Renée, as a bride for the young Archduke Ferdinand.

Meantime the Swiss, triumphant with their success in Italy, were carrying the war into Auvergne which they invaded with 30,000 men, and besieged Dijon, which was defended by La Trémouille, Governor of that province. It was drawing near to the time of vintage, and the vines were destroyed, and the suburbs of the town were burnt ; when the Governor, in his despair, promised the mercenary Swiss 200,000 écus d'or, and also to give up all French rights to the duchy of Milan and the comté of Asti, if they would return to their own country. The King's word was pledged by La Trémouille to this ; he also gave hostages, and

the enemy departed. But when the news of this agreement reached Louis, he refused to ratify it, was most indignant with his general (who had already lost him Milan), tried in vain to pacify the Swiss by other offers, but they were furious and invaded Burgundy in great force. The situation was desperate, and as a last hope the King sent Bourbon to take command with all the troops which could be spared from Picardy. Charles also received full powers to visit and fortify all towns, castles, and fortresses, and to act in every way according to his judgment. This was the kind of position which brought out all the splendid qualities of the young General ; no odds were too overwhelming, nothing was ever too hopeless to damp his spirits. His great talents did not attain their full scope until others had failed, and his character only rose to the highest strength and genius when he was threatened with absolute disaster.

The Duc de Bourbon arrived at Dijon on November 15, and " was received with as great honour as though the King himself had come." His entry into the city was a kind of triumphal procession, for he was met outside the gate by the " court of the parliament, all the King's officers, the captains, bailiffs and others, with the mayor and aldermen of the city, and also the ecclesiastics bearing the cross and relics from the churches." He was lodged in the royal palace ; he assembled all the men of war together, presided over them, and gave his orders, even to La Trémouille, who professed to receive him with pleasure, " but he would have obeyed none other." The task which awaited

Charles was one of immense difficulty and required rather the knowledge and wisdom of a mature statesman than the physical courage and prompt action of a young soldier. He found the frontier exposed and undefended, the strongholds untenable, and the whole province demoralised and almost ready to surrender without a blow. Even the defences of Dijon were no more than walls of earth, and it was the same in many other supposed fortified towns. Bourbon by the charm of his manner won over the other commanders to work heartily with him, and then lost no time before throwing himself into the stupendous labour of building up new fortifications at Dijon, Châlons, Beaune, Aussonne and the other important places of the Lyonnais, Champagne and Dauphiné, and supplying them with artillery and proper garrisons. He did not rest satisfied with this alone. One of the greatest difficulties he had to contend with was the insubordination of the hired soldiery ("gens de l'arrière-ban") who had been collected from other provinces and who remained about in formidable bands, cruelly pillaging the unfortunate peasants, "manger le bonhomme" as in bygone days. The young Duc de Bourbon with prompt decision divided his own soldiers into small troops, and as soon as he heard of robbery in any quarter he lost not a moment in sending to put a stop to it in the most summary manner. This rapid action, vigorously carried out, had the happiest results, and very soon a certain tranquillity was established in all the country, as the offenders were driven back to their distant homes.

Bourbon was not content with this, but took measures to prevent such pillage and oppression occurring in the future. While there was fear of hostilities, he caused the harvest, the corn, wine, hay, and straw, and the supplies for the villages to be collected in safe places within the towns. As a permanent legacy, he established careful supervision and legal authority throughout the territory which he commanded, and maintained the most strict discipline over all his soldiers, so as to win the confidence alike of rich and poor. In fact, he did not leave Burgundy until order and justice were established everywhere, and the whole frontier was in such a state of defence that there was no longer any risk from invasion by the Swiss or others.

When we remember such priceless service to his country as this, can we possibly understand the folly and blindness of a King who could drive to rebellion so valuable and devoted a subject ?

CHAPTER IV

1514

DEATH OF ANNE DE BRETAGNE—MARRIAGE OF FRANÇOIS DUC D' ANGOULÊME WITH CLAUDE DE FRANCE—LOUIS XII. MARRIES MARY OF ENGLAND—HIS DEATH AND THE SUCCESSION OF FRANÇOIS I.—CHARLES DE BOURBON MADE CONSTABLE OF FRANCE—HIS SISTER RENÉE MARRIES ANTOINE DUC DE LORRAINE—THE CONSTABLE ENTRUSTED WITH THE REFORM OF THE ARMY—WAR WITH ITALY—GALLANT ATTACK OF BAYARD ON COLONNA—BATTLE OF MARIGNANO, IN WHICH BOURBON ACHIEVES GREAT HONOUR—BOURBON GOVERNS MILAN—DEFENDS THE CITY AGAINST MAXIMILIAN, WHO RETREATS.

BY the death of Anne de Bretagne, twice crowned Queen of France, Charles de Bourbon lost a good friend at Court. She was a pious honest woman, unspoilt by her high position, and could be relied upon to be faithful and loyal in her attachment. Never very attractive or interesting, she yet kept a strong hold on the devotion of her husband, who deeply mourned her loss. Yet only a few months later, he carried out the marriage which she had always opposed, that of her eldest daughter, Claude, with the heir of the throne, François Duc d'Angoulême, whose mother Louise de Savoie also hated the match. The only mention she makes of it in her Diary is: "Le dix-huitième jour de may, à Saint Germain-en-Laye, l'an 1514, furent les nopces de mon fils."

It was a doleful wedding, with only unwilling submission on either side; although the Young Adventurer speaks of a great company present, still in mourning for Anne de Bretagne. Louise de Savoie did not even grace it with her presence. The poor little bride, in her black dress, watched her bridegroom set off on his usual hunting expedition in the afternoon and she cannot fail to have had dark forebodings of what her married life would be. The King, her father, must have been quite without imagination or sympathy to repeat in her case his own forced marriage with the unfortunate Jeanne de France!

François, spoilt and worshipped from his childhood, was precocious in his taste for illicit pleasures and, inheriting the easy morals of his parents, had already become notorious for his love affairs. As we read his mother's Diary, we see her absolute idolatry for "Mon César," and we follow her constant fearful anxiety lest some nearer heir to the throne should take his place. How she rejoices when the fragile life of Anne's little son flickers out. "Anne reine de France, à Blois, le jour de Ste Agnès, 21 de janvier (1503), eut un fils; mais il ne pouvait retarder l'exaltation de mon César, car il avoit faute de vie." It must have been a terrible moment for her when she heard that Louis XII., for motives of policy chiefly, was arranging a second marriage for himself with the young sister of Henry VIII., Mary of England, a very gay and precocious young lady of barely seventeen, whose beauty and attraction was spoken of as "un mal domestique" for her brother the King of England. The princess

was said to be already in love with Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk, whom she eventually married. But royal alliances take no note of such small matters.

It was a great blow to Louise of Angoulême that, when her son's inheritance seemed absolutely secured by the death of the Queen, this new peril should arise, and we can scarcely wonder at her making the unkind remark in that same Diary of her's : " Le 22 septembre 1514, le roy Louis XII., *fort antique et débile*, sortit de Paris pour aller au-devant de sa jeune femme, la reine Marie." He was not more than fifty-two ; but then the " galante, audacieuse " princess was barely seventeen. On this occasion, there was no want of pomp and ceremony, and we hear that the Duc de Bourbon was summoned to attend, both at the wedding itself and at the state entry of the royal bride into Paris when she was clothed in tissue of gold, with her beautiful hair hanging over her shoulders. Anne Duchesse de Bourbon, his mother-in-law, remained by special request of the King, with the young Queen, " in order to instruct her in the French ways." Charles was at the palace of Moulins spending Christmas " with good cheer," in the company of his wife Suzanne, when he received news from Madame de Bourbon of the King's increasing illness, and was summoned to Paris, where Louis XII. died at the hotel de Tournelles, on the 1st of January 1515. Before the end came, Louis expressed his wish that the young Duke should be Constable of France, " voulant faire de lui son écu et bouclier."

This envied title, the first distinction in the kingdom, was bestowed upon him by François I., to whom

Bourbon immediately paid his homage, for in the time-honoured words; "Le roi est mort. Vive le roi!"

The joy and exultation of Louise de Savoie were beyond all words. She had kept watch with gloating satisfaction over the last few months when King Louis had sacrificed his health to the desire of pleasing his young wife; he had changed all his quiet habits, given endless entertainments, dined at noon instead of at eight o'clock in the morning, and gone to bed at midnight, instead of six hours earlier. Now the end had come, and the son of Louise was King of France at the age of twenty-one.

The Duc de Bourbon was warmly welcomed at Court, both by François and Claude, the new Queen, who carried on her mother's favour towards the House of Bourbon. He was at once told that he was appointed Constable of France, and confirmed in his appointment as Governor of Languedoc, with an income of 24,000 livres tournois, and other great offices. For these he did homage, the office of Constable being for life, "and death only can put an end to it." While Charles was at Paris at this time, he and Anne of France arranged the marriage of his sister Renée with Antoine, Duc de Lorraine et de Bar, giving her as a dowry 120,000 livres tournois. The King took part in the wedding ceremonies before setting forth for Rheims, where the kings of France are wont to be crowned and anointed, in company with the Queen, his wife; Madame Louise, his mother; and all the princes and great lords of the realm, first of whom was the

Sieur de Bourbon, Constable of France. After the coronation at Rheims we are told that Charles first served as Constable, for he remained standing while the King dined, holding aloft a naked sword in his hand, " toute droite, sans soi bouger de la place."

Bourbon also took a splendid part in the great entry into Paris, very richly dressed, as were his horse and his squires, his attendants and his pages. At the King's banquet in the palace that night, he wore a long robe of cloth of gold, containing twelve yards (which had cost " quatorze vingts écus d'or au soleil " the yard), lined the splendid sables, and his cap was covered with jewels to the value of 100,000 écus. There were none in that company so magnificent as the young Constable of France. Amongst the festivities which followed there were tournaments on horseback and on foot, and in all these Bourbon played his part, in cloth of gold or crimson velvet. Unfortunately, in one encounter, he was wounded in the left arm, and laid up for three weeks, during which he held quite a levée, for the King and all the great lords and princes came to see him every day.

The expedition to Italy which had been planned by the late King was set on foot by François, and Bourbon, as Constable, had most difficult and important work before him. He fully realized the supreme importance of discipline and order in the army, and for this purpose insisted upon the most stern regulations. He fixed at eight horses each lance furnished, and insisted that the man-at-arms as well as his archers, his page and his valet were to be clad in the livery of the Captain under

whom they served, and he would not have a page or valet under seventeen years of age. He took special care for the protection of the country people, who were more exposed to insult and robbery than those in the town. The companies were not to remain longer than one day in the towns and villages, and when they received the order to march, the provost marshals had orders to follow and watch them closely, and to arrest all who should stray from the high road. These and many other ordonnances which the Constable was severe in carrying out, did more than anything to secure the efficiency and high character of his armies, and the discipline obtained was invaluable in time of war.

With this Italian campaign in view Charles was indefatigable in his preparations. Besides the labour involved in all this, by the King's desire he entered into negotiations with Ottaviano Fregoso, the Doge of Genoa, to bring back that city to the King's allegiance, and was completely successful, Fregoso remaining there as Governor under fealty to France. This was extremely important as the harbour was invaluable for the French ships of war. Meantime a great army was being gathered together at Grenoble. All the great nobles of the kingdom were there ; La Trémouille, La Palisse, d'Aubigny, Trivulzio, and, besides many others, the Duc d'Alençon, who had married the King's sister, Marguerite of Valois. It was here that the Constable received secret intelligence that the Swiss, in great force, were guarding the only passes which at that time were considered accessible for the crossing of

armies. One was the Mont Cenis, where the descent is made by Susa, and the other that of Mont Genèvre, the Mons Janus of the Romans, which was considered in olden times the best and safest in the Alps, because it is open to the South and sheltered from North winds. Bourbon also learnt that two great bands of horsemen, under Prospero Colonna and the Marchese di Pescara, were awaiting the descent of the French army into Piedmont.

The position was one of great difficulty, and the crossbow men under Aymard de Prie were embarked from Marseilles for Genoa. At this critical moment the Duke of Savoy himself sent private word of an unknown and difficult path over the Col d'Argentière. Lautrec, Trivulzio, and Navarro were sent to examine this pass which seemed at first impossible, but 1100 sappers and miners were set to work to prepare it in some measure. Meantime Bourbon commissioned La Palisse, with d'Aubigny, d'Imbercourt and the chevalier Bayard, to cross the mountains by the Col de Cabre and make a sudden raid upon Prospero Colonna, who was boasting that he would hold the French army "come gli popioni nella gabbia" (like pigeons in a cage). To do this he would have needed far more brilliancy than he gave any sign of. The story is most vividly told by the "Loyal serviteur" in his life of Bayard. The gallant little company rode across the rocky Col where cavalry had never passed before, descended by Droniez into the plain of Piedmont, crossed the Po at a ford where they had to swim their horses, and enquiring at the Castle of Carmig-

nolle found that Prospero and his company had just left and proposed to dine at the little town of Villefranche. The Italian general would not believe the news brought him by his spies, for he declared that the French had no wings to fly across the mountain, and he seems to have quietly sat down to his dinner, where he was surprised by the enemy. There had been an attempt to close the gate of the town, but a certain Norman gentleman had slipped his lance between the hinges and held it there till his followers burst it open. Colonna saw that all defence was hopeless, and cursed his ill fortune in not having met the French in the open field. With his usual chivalry, the gallant Bayard tried to comfort him : " Seigneur Prospero, it is the fortune of war ! To lose once and win next time."

The Italian camp appears to have contained rich spoils in the way of hundreds of valuable horses, gold and silver plate, splendid equipments, and a large sum of money, not to mention the prisoners whose ransom would be most precious of all.

Meanwhile the French army made its way across the Col d'Argentière, and the King, writing to his mother, describes it as " le plus estrange païs où jamais fust homme de cette compagnie." The Constable distinguished himself by his spirit and energy, which a Venetian agent, who met him at Démonte, described as " superb." The Swiss, taken by surprise and discouraged, retreated towards Milan, while François passed through Turin, took possession of Novara, and advanced with his army as far as Marignano, where he attempted to come to terms with the Swiss, and in fact

signed an agreement with certain of their representatives by which he was to buy their retreat away from Italy for 100,000 écus. Not having enough money with him, the King borrowed from all his princes and great lords, Bourbon alone lending him ten thousand écus. This large sum was sent at once to the appointed meeting place, in the care of the Maréchal de Lautrec and an escort of four hundred lances. But meantime, Mathias Schinner, the warlike Cardinal of Sion, used his utmost influence at Milan to induce the Swiss to fight against the French and totally destroy them. The young Adventurer tells us that he summoned the men together by the beating of a drum, and then, standing upon a chair in their midst, "like a fox who preaches to fowls" so worked upon them by every argument he could use—more especially dwelling upon the untold wealth and treasures which would be theirs when they came to sack the camp of the French King and his splendid nobles—that with one voice they promised to go forth and fight, and take no heed of any treaty.

It was on Thursday, September 13, 1515, that the Swiss set forth towards Marignano, where the French army was encamped in the plain, somewhat protected by canals and ditches. Although it was believed that the Swiss had been bought off, a most strict guard was kept night and day by Bourbon, who was in command of the advance guard. He never slept without most of his armour, and was always called at midnight when there was a change of watch, and went round to see that all was well. He also had ten or twelve trusty

spies at his own expense always on the look-out, in the direction of the enemies. Thus, on that eventful Thursday morning, one of these arrived about nine o'clock, when he was about to dine, and brought tidings of the departure from Milan. The Constable at once rode off to inform the King, who could not believe him as his treaty with the Swiss was already signed. But other messengers continued to arrive, saying that there were clouds of dust in the direction of Milan then, that the enemy was certainly approaching, and Bourbon hastened back to arrange the forces, while François put on his splendid suit of German armour.

Meantime the Swiss advanced in silence, without trumpets or drums. On first starting they had only made use of the famous silver horn, which had summoned their ancestors of old to fight for their liberty. They began hostilities about four o'clock in the afternoon, and the plan of their leader was to take possession of the enemy's artillery and point it against them as they had done at Novara. The guns had been placed in charge of the "landsknechte," who were startled when this sudden attack was made upon them alone and retreated about a hundred steps; but the Constable, with ready presence of mind, instantly sent forward the Black Bands of the centre (as usual under the King's orders) to protect the artillery, and threw the two wings of the army on the flanks of the Swiss, himself charging at the head of one of them. The "landsknechte" at once recovered themselves and rushed forward impetuously to atone for their error, while the Black Bands, who were jealous of these

foreign mercenaries, strained every nerve to show themselves worthy of the Constable's preference. Thus the battle was engaged all down the line, and a terrible *mêlée* followed, of which it is very difficult to obtain a clear account from the various contemporary chroniclers who give us the detached incidents which they saw. Thus, the "Loyal Serviteur" relates an adventure which befell the Chevalier Bayard, late in the evening. His horse had been killed under him, and the second which he mounted to charge the Swiss lances became so frantic that he broke his bridle and rushed into the midst of the enemy, until he became entangled in the vines trained from tree to tree. Bayard kept his presence of mind, and to escape instant death slipped gently from his horse, cast off some of his heavy armour, and managed to creep along a ditch till he reached his own people; when he borrowed a fresh horse and armour to return to the fray. It was the "Chevalier sans peur et sans reproche" who had the honour of knighting the King on the field of battle.

The young Adventurer gives a very boastful account of his own valiant deeds, but he renders high testimony, as do all other writers, to the gallant behaviour of the King who was ever in the forefront of danger. Overcome with thirst that night he asked for water, which could only be obtained from the polluted ditch near by. He was compelled to rest for awhile during those terrible hours of darkness on a gun carriage, under the care of an Italian trumpeter, named Christoforo, whose loud clarion note summoned his men-at-arms to protect their sovereign.

Marillac tells us of the grievous loss to the Constable of his young brother François de Bourbon, Duc de Chatellerault, who fell fighting with heroic valour on that fatal field. He also gives a vivid picture of the night closing in, while the battle continued by the light of the moon until nearly midnight. Then the trumpets of France sounded the retreat, and the Swiss blew their cow-horns, as is their custom, while the men on each side joined their own people, as far as possible; but the two armies were "within a stone's throw of each other, and there was neither ditch nor hedge between them. Thus they remained all night, without moving, and those who were mounted sat on their horses, with only such food and drink as they had with them. . . . and it is the firm belief that no man slept during all that night." In the King's letter to his mother, he says: "Et croyez, Madame, que nous avons esté 28 heures à cheval, l'armet à la teste, sans boire ny sans manger." He adds that an hour before dawn he sent word to "his brothers," the Constable in command of the advance guard and the Duc d'Alençon who commanded the rear-guard, to make ready for the attack, and when the Swiss advanced to try the fortune of battle, they received a warm welcome from the artillery. François bears the most generous testimony to the splendid courage and generalship of Bourbon, and represents him as "ne s'épargnant pas plus qu'un sanglier échauffé." The struggle was continued with the utmost courage and obstinacy on both sides, until 16,000 brave men were left upon the field, of whom 13,000 to 14,000 were Swiss who had fought with fierce

persistence until the end when the Venetian army arrived about midday on the Friday. The vanquished retreated in excellent order, the more easily that the King, who hated useless massacres, and hoped to make use of these brave mercenaries at some future time, gave orders that they were not to be pursued.

Amongst the great nobles of France who paid for the glory of Marignano with their lives were, besides François de Bourbon, d'Imbercourt, Bussy of the House of Amboise, the Comte de Sancerre, and the son of La Trémouille, who received sixty-two thrusts before he was mortally wounded, such was the excellence of his armour. Yet this, although so good a protection, made the knights very unwieldy and slow in their movements. Claude de Guise, thrown to the ground, saw whole battalions pass over him, and owed his life to his squire who warded off blows with his own body. Trivulzio, who had been in so many battles, declared that they were all child's play compared to the "affair of Marignano, which was not a fight between men but between ferocious giants." He was in great danger himself at one moment, when he rushed alone into the midst of the Swiss lances to defend his standard-bearer; his horse was pierced with wounds, his helmet had lost its plumes, and he would have fallen had not rescue arrived in time.

We notice a vivid and picturesque touch in many of these incidents which could scarcely be found in modern warfare.

There is an amusing remark at the end of the King's letter to his mother, written immediately after the

battle, with regard to the payment of the Swiss: "Madame, vous vous mocquerez de monsieur de Lautrec, de Lescun et de Michau qui ne se sont pas trouvez à la bataille, et se sont amusez à l'apoinctement des Suisses qui se sont mocquez d'eux." Du Bellay tells us that the Swiss had an ambuscade in readiness to seize Lautrec and his 100,000 écus, but that by means of his spies he escaped. Another account has it that the King's envoy had begun to count out all that money to the Swiss envoys, and had got as far as 20,000 écus, when he received news of their treachery, and packing up the rest, departed.

Every one has something to say about this famous battle, thus the Emperor Maximilian, who scarcely realised its importance, writes to his daughter Marguerite: "Innsbruck le 7 octobre. Très chière et très amée fille, we have had news. . . . The Swiss left Milan to the number of about 20,000 men on hearing of the French approach . . . and about 4 o'clock in the afternoon the fighting began, more by way of skirmish than giving battle, for there were so many ditches that the French men-at-arms on horseback could not help the landsknechte, and they fought so long that the night surprised them . . . and all that night the Swiss and French remained upon the field of battle doing nothing until the morrow, the 13 September, when they recommenced the said battle, which lasted three hours . . . Amongst the Swiss there was division and mutiny, so that they retreated to Milan and Como . . . and two days later they returned to their own country."

After the battle, the French King and his army continued their march towards Milan, which surrendered at once, but the young Duke Maximilian Sforza retreated to the Castello with a strong company of Swiss. This massive red brick fortress was considered one of the strongest in Italy, and Bourbon was left behind to besiege it with the help of Navarro, while François I., after receiving the keys of Milan, established himself at Pavia. After a siege of twenty days, the besieged Maximilian was induced by the Constable to give up the Castello and also that of Cremona, all that was left to him of his father Il Moro's possessions. He abdicated all his rights to the duchy in favour of François I., on condition of receiving a liberal pension and a home in France. The unfortunate young prince had little courage or ambition, and is said to have exclaimed on leaving Milan : " Thank God that I am free from the brutality of the Swiss, from the aggressions of the Emperor and from Spanish perfidy ! " A year later we find him writing in a most cheerful spirit from his exile at Amboise to his aunt Isabella d'Este.

This time-serving princess was in haste to pay court, as usual, to the conqueror. When François had entered Milan in triumph, exacted 100,000 écus from the inhabitants, and established a gay Court there, the Marchesa da Mantua sent her young son Federico to carry on the courtly adulation which he had learnt so well at the Vatican with Pope Julius. He took a favourite buffoon with him, who amused the frivolous King, and in his letters home, he tells how he has

joined the royal hunting parties and taken part in the games of *Palla*, in which the King distinguished himself by vigour and skill. François also appears to have devoted much time to banquets and festivities in honour of the fair ladies of Milan, and he wrote to ask Isabella d'Este to describe to him the latest fashions in dress of the Mantuan ladies. The French King was even unscrupulous enough to send the Bishop of Nice, with a forged Papal brief, to the convent of Goïto to bring him the " fair and frail " Brognina, who had been one of the ladies-in-waiting on Isabella. But this move was checkmated by the lady herself, and we are rather surprised that after this scandal, Isabella was only too delighted for her boy of fifteen to accompany the King to France in January, and remain in his company and favour during the following spring and summer.

In December, before his return home, François I. with his chief nobles went to Bologna to meet Pope Leo, who, after much clever fencing on both sides, entered into an alliance with him, regardless of the fact that the Emperor, Spain, and England, alarmed at the success of France, began to prepare another league against her. It was on the occasion of this meeting that Bourbon and his brother-in-law, Duke Antoine de Lorraine, claimed the honour of serving the Pope at high mass. On the King's departure, Charles de Bourbon was left as his Lieutenant-General for the duchy of Milan, " and gave him power over all things as if he were there in person." This was the supreme opportunity of his life, and the Constable of

Neurdein, phot's.

FRANÇOIS I. KING OF FRANCE
By Titian

France took full advantage of it. He devoted his whole energy and military talent to the difficult task in which all the rulers of that unfortunate state had hitherto failed. His first care was with the internal government of Milan, as it was of the utmost importance to ensure the loyalty of the inhabitants. He formed a representative council in which French and Italians met to examine all petitions, and report upon any grievance ; while he himself gave audience every day, and was accessible to all the citizens. By this means we are told that he gained the respect and confidence of his subjects. With regard to warlike preparations, the necessity of the greatest vigilance and exertion was soon forced upon him, when news came that Maximilian was preparing an immense army to attack the duchy of Milan.

Bourbon had been left with 700 lances, 6000 landsknechtes, and 4000 French adventurers, many of whom were to join the Venetian army in reconquering the lost territory of the Republic. The Constable immediately asked for reinforcements, and the King who had crossed the mountains but was still on his homeward journey, sent him a portion of the troops with him. But these were quite insufficient, and only with infinite trouble, persuasion, and splendid presents, did he receive a promise from several Swiss captains to bring their companies to Milan. He also obtained some help in men of Lombardy from Andrea Gritti, Doge of Venice. But his first care was for his fortifications, and he set out at once for Cremona, where he renewed the ramparts, saw that all the defences were in order

and strengthened the garrison. He then was hastening back to Milan, when at Pizzighettone he heard that the Imperial army was at hand, and at first thought of contesting their passage of the Adda, which was difficult to cross as it was swollen by the spring floods. But he felt that he was more urgently needed at Milan whither he arrived with his army late on Easter Day. Marillac gives a stirring account of the energy with which he set to work to strengthen and repair the fortifications, which then only consisted of single walls with a ditch outside. In twenty-four hours new ramparts had been built on the side the attack was expected, and shortly afterwards strong defences had been built all round the whole extent of the city. We have very full particulars of the way in which the great work was carried out by a body of 6000 pioneers at the expense of the Constable, who also pledged his credit to pay the Swiss auxiliaries, who had been enlisted in his service with so much difficulty.

The situation appeared so desperate at this moment that the other French generals pressed him to surrender, but Bourbon declared that he would save Milan or be buried in its ruins. Desormeaux says that "he showed the foresight and firmness which we admire in the greatest men of antiquity." Having secured great stores of provisions for the city, he caused all the neighbouring country to be laid waste that the enemy might find no means of subsistence. He also ordered the destruction of the suburbs of Milan, and when the Swiss companies arrived he advanced them three months pay to make sure of their

zeal. The walls were strongly manned with rows of infantry, crossbow men behind, and the heavy artillery above. Ward and watch was kept night and day, Bourbon and his captains constantly going round to visit every point, for fear of treachery; it was forbidden that any bell should be rung or any clock should strike in the city, and no more than two citizens should meet together between sunset and sunrise, while constant guard was kept in the Cathedral square and the other chief streets.

On the Thursday after Easter, while the Constable was at dinner, a Spanish prisoner was brought to him with news that the Emperor had already arrived close to the " faubourgs " with an army of 60,000 men and strong artillery. The man was at once given twenty écus and his liberty to take this message to Maximilian, that " Bourbon, Constable of France, had prepared a dinner for him to-morrow morning inside Milan, where he awaited him." The Emperor had expected to surprise the city, and had already given orders to bombard the walls, indeed a cannon ball is said to have fallen in the garden of the Commander's palace. But when he saw it was too well prepared to be taken by a sudden attack, he hesitated, for he had neither means nor time for a long siege. He was in want of money, his usual condition, and his troops demanded their pay. A letter, which was purposely allowed to fall into his hands, made him fear that the Swiss would betray him, as they had done to others who employed them. He ordered his men-at-arms to make an assault on foot, which they refused indig-

nantly. We are told that in a dream of the night he saw Leopold of Austria and Charles of Burgundy, grim spectres from their fatal battlefields, who warned him to escape from the peril which threatened him. Whether we believe this or not, the fact remains that on the Friday morning, before daybreak, he set forth with a few followers who thought he was going hunting, crossed the Adda and rode in haste to Trent. After the Emperor's departure, his army, left without a head and without pay, was unable to continue the siege, turned back, crossed the Adda again, pillaging Lodi, marked its passage everywhere by plunder and devastation, and finally disbanded. The Swiss returned to their own land, leaving the French and Italians to attack together all the towns which owned the allegiance of Maximilian in eastern Lombardy.

Hitherto the French had only been successful in attack, but they had never been able to preserve their conquests. It was the Duc de Bourbon who gave the first example of a triumphant defensive war, beyond the Alps. We have dwelt at some length on this Italian campaign, carried on with such splendid genius and valour, and crowned with such magnificent success, as it was at this time when the Constable of France had reached the summit of his fame and prosperity.

CHAPTER V

BOURBON RECALLED FROM ITALY—HIS DISAPPOINTMENT—HE ENTERTAINS THE KING AND THE COURT AT HIS PALACE OF MOULINS—DEATH OF FERDINAND OF SPAIN—RIVALRY OF CHARLES V. AND FRANÇOIS I. — BIRTH OF HEIR TO CROWN OF FRANCE — MAGNIFICENCE OF BOURBON AT ROYAL CHRISTENING — CHARLES V. ELECTED TO THE EMPIRE—FIELD OF THE CLOTH OF GOLD.

WE have now reached a critical and difficult period in the life of Charles de Bourbon, and one concerning which there is much difference of opinion amongst various historians. The unquestioned fact is this. At the end of May, 1516, within eight months of the great victory of Marignano, and two months later than his splendid defence of Milan, the Constable returned to France, leaving his government and command to Odet de Foix, Maréchal de Lautrec. It has been suggested that Bourbon gave up this splendid position of his own accord, but the more received opinion is that he was summoned home by the King. Marillac, his secretary, tells the story thus: "Pour lors le roy manda à mondit seigneur de Bourbon qu'il s'en retournât en France, à quoi mondit sieur se prepara." Not a word of explanation from François I.; no remonstrance or complaint from the great noble who is thus dismissed from his high place like

a valet. In the courtly chronicle of Martin du Bellay we find it simply stated that, " the Duc de Bourbon set forth to return to the King in France, leaving Lautrec governor of the duchy of Milan and lieutenant general of the said lord in Italy." Arnoul le Ferron and Beaucaire de Penguillon, both writing in the sixteenth century, affirm that the Duke's resignation was voluntary, but the mass of evidence inclines to his having been recalled.

In any case, after being delayed by an accident to his foot at Asti, Montcallier and Susa, he returned as soon as he was well enough, met the King, the Queen, and Madame Louise, Duchess d'Angoulême, at Vienne in Dauphiny, and travelled with them to his palace at Moulins, where all the Court were splendidly entertained during four or five days by the Duke, his wife Madame Suzanne, and her mother the great Anne de France. The presence of the King's mother is worthy of note as she plays a conspicuous part in our story later, and there are not wanting historians, like Michelet, who would make us believe that she was already passionately in love with the handsome young Constable, that she had procured him that high office, and that his recall from Italy was due to her longing for his presence ! As Paulin Paris says, " Is it possible to falsify history more boldly ? " when we are told that Louise speculated on the delicate health of Suzanne and had given Charles a ring of betrothal which he always wore. And this love-affair, with a woman of forty, was supposed to take place in the presence of Bourbon's loving wife and under the

watchful eyes of her vigilant mother! This was certainly forestalling the tragic story of the future.

When the King and his Court had left Moulins and returned to Blois, the Duc and Duchesse de Bourbon with Madame Anne went to the beautiful castle of Chantelle, their favourite amongst many stately homes, and stayed there quietly for the summer. In September it was settled by them to call together at Riom, the States-general of Auvergne, as there were various important subjects concerning the rights of the people to be settled. The Duc de Bourbon appears to have given such great satisfaction that his subjects presented him with a free gift of 50,000 livres to be paid in the course of the next five years. Marillac tells us that they looked upon "Monsieur de Bourbon as one of the most virtuous and greatest princes of the kingdom and could not do enough for his service."

The money at least was very acceptable, for the Constable had never received any repayment of the immense sums which he had spent during his government of Milan, and indeed we are told that all the subsidies due to him for his various great offices of State were still unpaid. During all the campaign in Italy he had not received a "denier" from the royal treasure, and more than 100,000 livres were owing to him, for which he had mortgaged large estates. He pointed all this out to the King, when he was summoned later to join his Majesty in Paris, and to travel in his company to Amboise where all the Court was assembled; "mesdites dames, femmes et mères, tant du roy que de monseigneur de Bourbon."

But the Constable's appeal was in vain, for François, with easy good temper, put it lightly aside with vague promises. This was the more difficult to endure when Charles saw the most reckless extravagance on every side, and royal " états, pensions et bienfaits " bestowed lavishly on the most unworthy Court favourites. It is more than probable that at the root of the King's ingratitude there was already a strong feeling of jealousy towards this great and splendid noble, so close to the throne, so constantly the beloved hero of the country and—alike by his distinguished valour and success in battle and his magnificence at Court—his rival both in war and peace, abroad and at home.

Meantime another rival who was to prove formidable indeed to François I. had appeared on the horizon. In January of this year, 1516, by the death of Ferdinand the Catholic, his grandson the Archduke Charles, inherited Castile, Aragon, the Two Sicilies, Naples and Navarre, and the vast mysterious New World discovered by Columbus. This young prince of barely sixteen had already been declared " of age " to inherit the Netherlands, Burgundy and the rest of those great dominions which had come to his father Philip I.,[1] since whose death in 1506, the boy had been brought up under the watchful care of his Aunt, Marguerite of Austria. By this wise and high-minded princess, Charles had been trained for future empire with unique and marvellous advantages. He had been taught to sign state documents at seven years old, to write diplomatic letters to the Pope at eight, and in the same

[1] See page 109 of " Marguerite of Austria." Christopher Hare.

year he was taken, by the express command of the Emperor, in the state barge from Malines to Antwerp, with the Regent Marguerite and the great ministers of State, that he might take part in the discussion concerning the League of Cambray. A little later, the royal youth has to write a suitable letter to his then betrothed bride, Mary of England, and to send her a ring ; he is appointed Grand Master of Calatrava and Alcantara, and also shows a strong taste for hunting, to the great delight of his grandfather, Maximilian. No important political meeting is ever complete without his presence, and in 1513, we find the young Archduke at Tournay, with Marguerite and Maximilian, holding solemn conference with Henry VIII. and Cardinal Wolsey. He continues to write courtly letters in French (walon) to his grandfather, Ferdinand of Aragon, and his unfortunate mother, Joanna, and at the age of fifteen, his majority is celebrated by the reception of that coveted honour, the Golden Rose, from Pope Leo X.

While Charles was thus early initiated into the outward ceremonial of government, no pains were spared by his aunt and his tutors—amongst whom was the future Pope, Adrian VI.—to impress upon him his coming responsibilities, and to train him in habits of careful study, unwearied diligence and self-control.

How different were the surroundings and education of his rival François I. ! His mother, Louise de Savoie, whose own life was full of scandalous adventures, " exquisite, immoral," if we are to believe her latest

historian,[1] showed her affection for the boy, her idol and her " César," by spoiling and indulging him to the utmost. We have seen something of his childish games and active sports in the account of the Young Adventurer, and we know how early he began his gay life at the French Court, where, having listened awhile with easy good temper to his tutor, the Cardinal d'Amboise, he would hasten to enjoy the company of the jester Triboulet, or that of the Court ladies who delighted in the handsome merry boy. He began his love-affairs at fifteen and carried them on with perpetual changes therein all his life. Fickle and inconstant, ruled by favourites, luxurious and averse to the dull study of state affairs, yet ever ready to meet the first comer with a smile and jest, François was naturally far more popular than his rival Charles, who took his life and his duties so seriously. Heredity played its part with both princes, for Louise of Savoie and her husband—that Comte d'Angoulême who refused to marry her unless he could bring his mistress to Court—both lived again in the King of France. It is true that the grandson of Maximilian had but little of that genial Emperor's eager, volatile, generous nature, which seemed to give him the secret of perennial youth. Charles was more like his other grandfather, Ferdinand, in his cautious diplomacy and cold impassiveness, but most of all he resembles his grandmother, the great Queen Isabel, with her single-hearted devotion to a cause, and her splendid talent for government, which was, in fact, the power of taking infinite pains.

[1] E. Sichel.

An intimate character study of these two sovereigns is of the utmost interest and value to us when we consider the supreme importance of their future rivalry in the story of Charles de Bourbon.

Charles V. of Spain had succeeded to his inheritance at a critical time when he and his ministers clearly saw that their first aim must be to ensure peace with the King of France, that formidable neighbour who could invade the Netherlands from the north of his kingdom, attack Spain by the frontier of the Pyrenees, and descend from Lombardy on the Kingdom of Naples. The young prince took the matter in hand without delay, and through the ministers on either side, the Sire de Chièvres and Arthus de Boisy, the Peace of Noyon was signed on August 13, 1516. A marriage contract being the usual way of strengthening such a bond, Charles was quite willing to accept yet another betrothal, which this time was to the baby daughter of François I. As this would need to be much delayed, the Catholic King (Charles) was to pay the Most Christian King (François) a yearly sum of 100,000 écus d'or, until the marriage should take place. Maximilian had not been consulted by his grandson, but he was bound to ratify the truce, thus bringing his nine years' war with Venice to a most unsatisfactory conclusion.

These transactions greatly conduced to the honour and glory of the King of France. He was now relieved from any fear of the Swiss, with whom he had made a close alliance after Bourbon had won Milan from them ; he was at peace with England and had achieved

so great a position that, in part of Germany, he was even looked upon as a possible competitor for the Holy Empire, in succession to Maximilian. It was this hope which roused in François I. the dangerous ambition which was to make him a rival of the Archduke Charles for the Imperial crown, and which was to transform these newly made allies into deadly enemies for the space of a quarter of a century.

Meantime, Charles, Duc de Bourbon, as Constable of France, had been commissioned by the King to pass into Burgundy and there make a general review of all the men-at-arms in the various garrisons of that province. Having accomplished this to his satisfaction, he returned to his Castle of Moulins and there remained for a time, holding a stately court for his nobles, and with the ladies of his family entertaining them with his usual princely hospitality. He was invited to accompany the King and Queen to Rouen, where he took a great company and provided lavish entertainments. In July of the following year, 1517, it was a supreme joy and satisfaction to him when his wife, Suzanne, gave birth to a son and heir of his vast domains. There was great rejoicing amongst his subjects, and the more so as this had been scarcely expected, "vu la difformité et indisposition de la personne de madite dame. . . ." There had been no son born to a Duc de Bourbon since those of Duc Charles I., eighty years before. When the King was informed of this happy event, he expressed his willingness to "hold the child at the baptismal font and make a Christian of him." His Majesty arrived in October with a great

court at Moulins where he was received with magnificent festivals and tournaments which lasted a fortnight, at a fabulous expense. The baby prince, as eldest born, received the title of Comte de Clermont; the King gave him his own name François, Anne de France was his godmother, and he was baptised by Monseigneur, the Bishop de Lisieux, in the presence of a great company of bishops and nobles, in the chapel of the Castle of Moulins, most richly adorned and decorated. The Chevalier Bayard was present and bestowed the honour of knighthood upon this fragile little creature, who was destined to die before he could hold even a wooden sword in his baby hand.

The King departed in high good temper, greatly pleased with his splendid reception, and in the spring of the following year, he invited Bourbon to pay a return visit to Amboise, where to the Queen Claude, "la bonne, sage et très parfaicte royne de France," was born her first son, the long desired heir to the throne of France. There was the usual rejoicing and costly expenditure in festivities, not only at Court, but throughout the whole kingdom, in which the Duc de Bourbon took his full share. He took advantage of this propitious moment to make another appeal to his sovereign for the payment of the immense sums due to him, but received no redress; "n'en peut oncq avoir expédition de fait." However he concealed his disappointment, went out hunting with the King, and took part in all the various tournaments. The Young Adventurer, to whom these were the very salt of life, gives a full account of some curious mimic warfare

which almost went beyond a game. He had never seen anything like it before.

" The King caused a sham town of some size to be built of wood, out in the open field, and surrounded with a moat, and placed there four great pieces of artillery . . . and Monsieur d'Alençon, with 100 men-at-arms on horseback, was stationed within the said town, and the Young Adventurer, with 400 men on foot, feigned to come to the help of M. d'Alençon, who was besieged by Monsieur de Bourbon with 100 men-at-arms on horseback, and M. de Vendôme with 100 men on foot. . . . Then the King, in splendid armour, joined the Young Adventurer and threw himself into the town. The artillery within the town was composed of great wooden cannons bound with iron, which shot forth immense balls filled with air, which struck the besiegers and rolled them on the ground, and it was most amusing to see the jumps they made ! When they had enough of this, M. d'Alençon and all his men-at-arms on horseback, galloped out of the sham town, and the King and the Adventurer with him, and three great pieces of artillery began to fire as if they were on the field of battle. . . . Against them came M. de Bourbon with 100 men-at-arms, and they began to attack each other in excellent order; it was the finest combat ever seen and the most like real war. . . . But the pastime did not please every one, for some were killed and others wounded . . ." adds the Young Adventurer !

The baptism of the infant Dauphin, who did not live

to be King of France, was a splendid ceremony, and Pope Leo X., who was one of the sponsors, sent his nephew Lorenzo dei Medici, whom he had made Duke of Urbino, to represent him ; and besides the nobles of France there were a number of ambassadors. But amongst them all, the Duc de Bourbon was so much distinguished by his magnificence and the splendid company he brought with him, " all dressed in gorgeous velvet with gold chains which went three times round their necks," that the King's jealousy was again aroused, and he listened to the courtiers who remarked that so rich a lord could not need the repayment of his money ! Bourbon certainly never received it, although again and again he made application to François I., and was compelled to mortgage more estates to pay the interest of the large sums which he had borrowed on the King's behalf.

Meantime on January 12, 1519, the Emperor Maximilian died, and the fierce secret conflict which had been going on between Charles and François, for the succession to the Empire, no longer smouldered but broke out into open flames. Maximilian had passed away in full confidence of his grandson's victory, yet this was by no means a certainty, although the enormous sum of nearly six thousand gulden had already been spent or promised in bribes to secure it. The whole contest now began over again, and the King of France, with his greater command of money and the support of the Pope, seemed at first to have the advantage. He had sent to Germany, Bonnivet and other astute ambassadors, who were commissioned to

agree to every demand and win over the Electors at any price. Nothing is more amazing to us in the history of this election than the greedy readiness of princes, bishops, statesmen, generals—men of every condition—to receive bribes, until it seems as if all the world were for sale. We have no space here, in the life of Bourbon, to dwell upon the long and deeply interesting struggle which I have fully described elsewhere.[1]

In the end the voice of Germany was in favour of the grandson of Maximilian, who, at a cost of 850,000 florins, was elected at Frankfort on June 28, 1519, "King of the Romans," his formal title until the papal coronation (often dispensed with) gave him the right to be called "Romanorum Imperator." In point of fact, this empty crown of Empire added nothing to his actual possessions and much to his obligations. Yet the ambition of Charles was justified, for this dignity of Suzerain Lord was, in a way, hereditary in his race, and had he shunned the burden of such greatness, looked upon almost as "divine majesty," he would have lost prestige in the eyes of Europe.

Sooner or later, war was now inevitable between the rival sovereigns, but for the present an armed neutrality was carried on. The King of France had already made fresh advances to Henry VIII. whose alliance was of the utmost importance to him, and we find the Duc de Bourbon summoned to Paris to help in the entertainment of an important embassy, and take part in the usual "dances, farces, morisques, momeries," and other Court amusements. The Con-

[1] "Marguerite of Austria," p. 259; see Christopher Hare.

stable again seeks to recover the immense sums owing to him by the King, but without success, and he then returns to his own domain, out of heart and discouraged. He has had recent domestic troubles in the loss of his infant son and heir, the precious little Comte de Clermont, and a fresh disappointment when twin boys of Madame Suzanne did not live to see the light of day. Soon after this sad event, the bereaved mother, who was in ill-health and with little hope for the future, decided to make her will, by which she named her husband, Charles de Bourbon, her universal legatee, " thus showing the great and cordial love which she bore to him." This was signed on December 15, 1519, at the Castle of Montluçon, with the full approbation and consent of her mother, Anne de France, Duchesse de Bourbon.

The King had expressed a wish to spend Christmas with his Court at the Bourbon palace of Chatellerault, which was situated in the midst of the finest warrens and game preserves in the kingdom. With him came his wife, Queen Claude, and his mother, Madame Louise, and the Constable entertained the whole company with princely magnificence, having provided the choicest wines in his cellars, and abundance of rare viands, while game was good and plentiful, for never was there seen better sport, or gayer hunting parties. With dutiful homage he accompanied the royal party on their way, with an escort as far as Cognac, where he took leave of his guests and returned to spend Easter at Chatellerault with his wife and her mother.

Meanwhile both Charles V. and François I. were

eagerly seeking the alliance and friendship of Henry VIII., who was quite willing to receive advances from both princes. The young King of Spain landed in England in May, 1520, and spent five days at Dover with the King, his uncle (by marriage with Catherine of Aragon), in the friendliest intimacy. They discussed the position of Europe and the possibilities of conquest in the future, and Wolsey was encouraged to hope for his future elevation to the throne of St Peter. The very day when Henry VIII. took leave of his royal nephew, he embarked for Calais to pay a state visit to the King of France. He was accompanied by Queen Catherine and his prime minister Wolsey, and escorted by all the great officers of the crown, the chief prelates, and all the greatest nobles of his kingdom. It was to be a rivalry of magnificence on this occasion, and the King of England brought with him, on his ships, a vast palace of wood and glass which was to be put together outside the Castle of Guines, and to be hung with gorgeous velvet and silk, and priceless tapestry.

The invitation had been given by the French King who was already awaiting the coming of his guests to that famous meeting on the Field of the Cloth of Gold, which has left a kind of legendary glamour upon the pages of history. Not only the two monarchs but all the great nobles of both countries had come prepared to outvie each other at any cost, and as du Bellay remarks, "They bore their fields, their forests and their windmills on their shoulders." [1] In this stately

[1] "Memoires de Fleurange."

pageant the ladies played their part and honoured the feats of chivalry of the gallant knights by their presence. With the King of France was his wife, Queen Claude, and his sister, Marguerite of Alençon; and amongst the ladies in attendance upon her was Ann Boleyn, who was thus first brought under Henry VIIIth's notice. Madame Louise de Savoie, the King's mother, was also present, and gives the following account of the proceedings in her Journal.

"On the last day of May, 1520, my son arrived at Ardres, called in Latin Ardea; and the said day the King of England, second of his race, arrived at Calez, which is called in Latin Caletum or Portus Itius, according to Cæsar in the fifth Book of his Commentaries.

"On Tuesday, June 5, 1520, the King of England arrived at Guynes, and the Queen, my daughter and I arrived at Ardres; . . .

"On June 7, 1520, which was the day of la Feste-Dieu, about six or seven in the afternoon, my son and the King of England met in the tent of the latter, near Guynes.

"On the ninth day of June, 1520, my son and the King of England found themselves in the country, each with fifty men, and took wine together about half-past five in the afternoon.

"On June 17, 1520, the lodging of M. d'Orval at Ardres caught fire about half-past ten at night; which was a most unfortunate thing for we were in a suspicious and evil place.

"On June 23, 1520, the Legate of England chanted

the Mass in the open fields before the two kings. All the chapel was made and dressed by the English except the pavilion of my son's chapel which was set out in the oratory. My son knelt down to the right, and took " la paix " and the gospel first ; and the little Cardinal of Vendosme served them.

" On June 24, 1520, the two kings took their departure and said adieu to each other."

Throughout the Journal of the Queen-mother, it is only the doings of " my son " which have any interest for her. The most vivid account of the Field of the Cloth of Gold is that given in the " Mémoires de Fleurange " (the Young Adventurer). He rises to a pitch of enthusiasm as he describes the camp of François I., with the most beautiful tents that ever were seen—some in cloth of gold and others in smooth textures of gold and silver, with mottoes and chivalric devices, hung inside with velvet and silk. There were more than three hundred in number, and above them waved the banners of the princes and lords, and the arms of France. In the midst rose the royal pavilion, even more spacious and splendid than the others, with a golden statue of St Michael above it, glittering in the sunshine. The state meeting of the two kings on June 7 was a gorgeous ceremonial arranged with an amount of punctilious etiquette which betrayed uneasy suspicion. Each monarch set forth from his own dominion at the same moment, and slowly advanced at the same pace on a splendid war-horse, preceded by his Constable holding a naked sword, and followed by all the great lords in sumptuous costumes,

and an escort of four hundred archers and men-at-arms. Outside his armour, the King of France wore a mantle of cloth of gold, sprinkled with pearls, diamonds, rubies, and emeralds, and on his head a velvet cap shining with precious stones, from which floated magnificent white plumes. The King of England was dressed with like splendour, save that his mantle was of cloth of silver. They met at last with courtly salutations and embraced each other while still on horseback, then dismounted and entered the stately pavilion together, arm in arm. François was anxious to obtain a definite promise of assistance from Henry, who temporized, while using the most friendly language. "Sire," he said, "neither your realms nor other the places of your power is the matter of my regard; but the steadfastness and loyal keeping of promise between you and me. That observed and kept, I never saw prince with my eyes, that might of my heart be more loved." They examined together the treaty of 1518, by which the Dauphin was to marry Mary of England, and François I. was to pay a large yearly sum until the celebration of the marriage. In reading the preamble, Henry VIII. left out his title of "King of France," remarking to his brother sovereign; "I will omit it as you are here, for I should lie," yet it was certainly retained in the written document.

In the showy tournaments which were repeated on many days, the two kings played their part gallantly. Marillac tells us that one day the Duc de Bourbon rode a wonderful courser, who could leap his own height, and was greatly admired by Henry VIII., to whom

the Constable immediately offered it, and it was graciously accepted. In the jousts and tournaments the English knights appear to have shown more strength and vigour, and the French more skill and agility. Henry himself was a splendid archer, and "was good to see" in his trials with the crossbow. But Fleurange tells us that on one unlucky day when the two princes were in the great pavilion together and had taken some wine, the King of England exclaimed: "My brother, I will wrestle with you," and seizing the King of France with his strong hands, sought to overthrow him, but François was also a good wrestler, and being more skilful, tripped him up and Henry fell flat on the ground. He got up in a rage and wished to continue the fight, but the Queens interfered and the wrestlers were persuaded to sit down to the supper which awaited them. This defeat rankled in the mind of Henry, and did much to counteract the good which all the gifts and festal meetings had done. The two kings parted with every appearance of cordiality, but Henry VIII. had scarcely left François I. before he went on to Gravelines, where the Emperor Charles awaited him, and they agreed to a new treaty together.

CHAPTER VI

FRESH AFFRONTS TO THE DUC DE BOURBON — EXPEDITION TO PICARDY — THE CONSTABLE REFUSED HIS RIGHT TO COMMAND THE GUARD — DEATH OF SUZANNE DE BOURBON, WIFE OF THE CONSTABLE—DEMAND OF THE QUEEN-MOTHER, LOUISE DE SAVOIE — HER CHARACTER —REFUSAL OF BOURBON—THE CONSTABLE THREATENED WITH A LAW-SUIT TO DEPRIVE HIM OF HIS DOMINIONS OF THE HOUSE OF BOURBON—THE ADVICE OF ANNE DE FRANCE.

"THE Chronicle of Marillac," which is full of the naive details of an eye-witness, ends with the departure of the Duc de Bourbon in company with the King from the Field of the Cloth of Gold, their journey together by Abbeville and Amiens to Paris, and the return of Charles to his Castle of Châtellerault, where he remained during the winter with his wife and her mother. He felt himself neglected after all he had done for the King, who had become cold and indifferent to him, and steadily refused to pay him arrears of his various appointments, or to return him the large amount spent in the Italian Campaign. It was not for want of money, as François could be liberal enough to his favourites, thus in the close neighbourhood of the Bourbon palace of Chatellerault, he had built a splendid castle for Bonnivet. One day when the Constable was attending him in a great hunting party,

the King asked what he thought of it. "I think," was the proud reply, "that the cage is too spacious and too beautiful for the bird."

"What you say is from jealousy," exclaimed the King. "How can your Majesty believe," rejoined Bourbon, "that I can feel jealous of a gentleman whose ancestors were only too happy to be the squires of mine?"

Somewhat later when war was on the point of breaking out with Charles V., the Constable of France was not included in the four great military governments of Picardy, of Champagne, of Guienne and of Lombardy, which the King of France distributed to meet the enemy on his various frontiers. These great dignities had been given "to the timid Duc d'Alençon, to the peaceful Duc de Vendôme, to the arrogant Bonnivet and to the irresolute Lautrec." The affront of being deliberately left out from these important posts was most keenly felt by Charles de Bourbon, who soon received a more direct and unendurable insult. The King had commanded Bourbon to raise in his own estates, six thousand foot soldiers and three hundred men-at-arms, and when he obeyed and joined the King in Picardy with his levies, hoping for high reward for his promptness and zeal, he was called upon instead to endure an intolerable humiliation.

The office of Constable of France gave him a right to the command of the advance-guard, and in this position he had acquitted himself with honour and glory at the battle of Marignano. But in Picardy in 1521, he found himself deprived of it from no fault of

his own, and the Duc d'Alençon who had married the King's sister Marguerite, and distinguished himself in no other way, was placed in charge of the most important place in the army. Charles de Bourbon was deeply hurt and disappointed by this unjust treatment on the part of his sovereign ; he was too proud to utter a word of complaint, but he never forgave or forgot it. We are told that more than once he was heard to quote the haughty reply of a great lord to Charles VII., who asked if any bribe would tempt him from his loyalty. " No, sire, not even the offer of three kingdoms such as yours ; but an affront would be enough." Yet far worse than this was in store for that proud unbending spirit !

Martin du Bellay, the well-known contemporary chronicler, who himself fought at the battles of Marignan and Pavia, and whose fairness is undisputed, tells us that Bourbon endured his King's ingratitude with patience, and served well and faithfully under his orders. He also adds : " I have seen in my time that the people who have left the King's service from discontent, have in the end done him more injury than many others. Thus for example the Bishop of Liège, the Prince of Orange, the Marquis of Mantua, the Duc de Bourbon, the seigneur André d'Orie and several others." In this very campaign where he was so cruelly wronged, there came a moment when, if the Constable's advice had been followed, the Emperor might have met with the same fate under the walls of Valenciennes which François I. himself was to endure later at the Battle of Pavia.

The French army had crossed the Escaut on a bridge thrown over the river below Bouchain, and had formed in order of battle, before the forces under the Count of Nassau, 12,000 landsknechte and 4000 men-at-arms, sent by Charles V., could bar their passage. The imperial army, having failed to prevent this manœuvre, and being no longer protected by the river, was not strong enough to resist an attack, which could not fail to mean certain victory to the French. This did not occur to François, who, although a very brave and dashing soldier king, was by no means a good general. But the Constable of France, who had taken so splendid a part at Agnadello and at Marignano, seized the position at a glance with the instinct of a born commander. His wrongs were forgotten ; he listened only to the impulse of his warlike genius, and eagerly urged an impetuous and instant attack upon the unprepared enemy. La Palisse and the Sieur de la Trémouille, both experienced Captains, agreed with his suggestion, but the King of France preferred to listen to the timid advice of the Maréchal de Châtillon. He was contented to watch the escape by flight of an army which he might have destroyed. The forces of Charles V. were suffered to retreat unmolested to Valenciennes, when prompt action on the part of their foes would have crushed and annihilated them. In this decision of the French King we cannot tell how far he may have been guided by jealousy and suspicion of the prince he had so deeply injured.

This is the opinion of Gaillard who remarks, " It was to the desire of contradicting and mortifying the

Constable that the King sacrificed his wish to fight. In vain did la Trémouille, Chabannes, and Bayard demand permission to pursue the imperial army at the head of their companies of men-at-arms, and promise to defeat them with this small number of troops ; the army spent the whole night in passive inaction. . . . The Emperor himself was so struck with the danger which his army had so narrowly escaped, that he fled that very night into Flanders with one hundred horsemen."

As Du Bellay says : " And on that day God had delivered our enemies into our hands, but we would not accept, a thing which cost us dearly afterwards ; for those who refuse the good fortune presented by God, find that it does not return again when asked for."

Even this last disappointment, Charles de Bourbon endured in silence. He followed the campaign, obeying the orders which he received when it should have been his place to command. " He took the town of Bouchain, carried by assault that of Hédin and, by this means placed all the neighbouring fortresses under the King's command. All who write about this expedition cannot be silent with regard to the valour, the judgment, and the determined resolution of M. de Bourbon, and they dwell upon his goodness, his devotion to the success of the crown, and his patience in bearing the neglect of the King and the evil treatment which was the reward of his fidelity."

We have reached the most critical point of the history of Charles Duc de Bourbon when in April 1521, he lost his gentle loving wife Suzanne de Bourbon.

Laval, who continued the Chronicle of Marillac, says that the poor lady was so grieved and worried by the affronts which her husband had endured from the King, that she fell ill and being ever weakly and delicate, had no strength to recover and so " décéda, quelques secours qu'on luy sut porter." This fragile heiress of the great house of Bourbon, the centre of so many hopes, was laid to rest in the Priory Church of Souvigny, amidst the stately tombs of her ancestors, the Dukes of Bourbon, and her canopied monument may be seen there to this day. After sixteen years of married life, Charles had indeed good cause to mourn for the wife who had made his high position unassailable ; and we can picture to ourselves the despairing grief of the great Anne de France at the loss of her " dear obedient daughter," the only child of her House and her love.

Yet no one could have foreseen that almost before poor little Suzanne was laid in her grave, her husband the Duc de Bourbon would find himself overwhelmed by a new misfortune which he was powerless to avert.

In order to understand the history of this critical period, it will be needful to study not only the recorded facts, but the state of feeling and even the gossip of the day. From all these sources we learn that Louise de Savoie, the King's mother had long shown a very warm interest in the handsome young Prince, splendid in rank and magnificence, Charles de Bourbon. It was said that her influence had helped to make him Constable of France and that she had procured his recall from Italy when he was Governor of Milan, as she could not endure his absence. Yet, we are

J. Giraudon, photo.

ANNE DE FRANCE (AT STE. ANNE)
Statue from Chantelle (in the Louvre)

scarcely prepared to hear that on the death of his wife Suzanne, this Royal lady demanded of her son François I., that he should arrange a marriage for her with Charles de Bourbon. Born in 1476, she had at this date, reached the mature age of forty-five, while the young Duke was only thirty-one. A glance at the character and personal history of Louise de Savoie may throw some light upon this amazing incident.

The orphan daughter of the Sieur de Bresse and Marguerite de Bourbon, Louise was brought up by the charity of her aunt, Anne de France, Duchesse de Bourbon. As a girl of twelve a brilliant marriage was arranged for her with a peer of the blood-royal, the Comte d'Angoulême, an elderly roué, who was openly unfaithful to her. Louise was scarcely nineteen when she was left a widow with two children, Marguerite and François, to whom she proved a most devoted but foolishly unwise mother. Louis XII. was their guardian and after a time rumours reached him that the conduct of the widowed princess was so open to reproach, even for those licentious days, that he sent his trusted friend, the Maréchal de Gié to supervise her household. In order to end a notorious scandal, Gié was brave enough to dismiss her favourite " Valet " and secretary Jean de St Gélais, and for this Louise never forgave him, as we see later in that tragic " Proces de Gié " when he was hounded to his ruin by lies and false witnesses. When power came to her, after her son's accession to the throne, Louise paid off all old scores and no one ever offended her with impunity. As it was said of her : " Elle va, comme on

sait, exiler, pendre ou brûler quelques objets de ses rancunes."

Such at heart was the woman whose fatal passion for Charles de Bourbon helped to destroy him. In her gay Boccaccian Court, surrounded by shameless flatterers, Louise de Savoie doubtless felt that her hand would be a prize indeed for any Royal suitor, and that she stooped to offer it to the highest noble of the realm. Her personal appearance in youth is thus described to us by the artistic Robinet Testard. " Mince et meme sêche, la robe bien ouverte, cheveux d'un blond châtain relévés sous une coiffe, le front haut, les sourcils minces et legèrement aigues, la peau blanche et fine, de maigres joues peu colorées, la bouche et le menton mignons, le nez droit et massif, les yeux gris en coulisse un peu bour-soufflés, au regard qui se trahit. . ." There was lurking jealousy in her affection for her marvellous daughter, the far-famed " Marguerite des Marguerites," but the chief devotion of her life was for her son ; " mon fils, mon roi, mon seigneur, mon glorieux et triomphant César . . ." as she calls him in her diary, which is almost entirely devoted to his adventures and exploits.

François I. remained under his mother's influence and appears to have refused her nothing. When she asked for the hand of Charles de Bourbon, he may have known her too well to be surprised, or it may have seemed to him an easy way of securing for her the vast possessions of the House of Bourbon to which she was allied. In any case a modern writer on the " Renaissance " thus tells the story : " Francis sent a Lord to

apprise Bourbon of his will. An old chronicler describes the scene. "When the Duke heard these tidings, for a long time he spake no word, but stood looking at the noble messenger, his brother-in-arms, and at length he said to him: "Is it an act worthy of our friendship to bring me the offer of such a woman . . . the dread of all nations? . . . I would not do this thing, no, not for all the riches of Christendom." When the King told Louise of this answer, "she was like a woman bereft of her senses . . . and cried: "The matter shall not rest here, for by the Creator of souls his words shall cost him dear. . . . My son, you shall avenge me. . . ." [1] A woman scorned in her outspoken love which turned to hatred and was soon to bear bitter fruit.

If some French historians are naturally reticent about this scandal at the time, the news rapidly spread to distant Courts, for we find Henry VIII. saying to the ambassador of Charles V.: "There has been much discontent between the King François and the said Bourbon, since he has refused to marry Madame la Régente, who loves him very much." [2]

The next move in this complicated game is that the Constable of France finds himself threatened with a lawsuit, as the King's mother puts forward her claim to the great estates of the House of Bourbon, as belonging to her *ab intestat* by the death of Madame Suzanne, her first cousin (see table II.), she being more closely allied to the said Duchesse de Bourbon than was her husband

[1] E. Sichel.
[2] Quoted by Mignet. Vol. II. p. 364.

Charles. We have good reason to believe that this claim, a true bolt from the blue, was made at the instigation of the Chancellor Du Prat, who pointed out to Louise that Charles had already married Suzanne to make assurance doubly sure of his right of succession to these dominions, and that now on the death of his first wife, he might be persuaded to marry again in order to make sure of them once more. However indignant he may be at first, he would soon see where his interest lies, and be thankful both to insure his position and regain the King's favour by this marriage, which will give Louise de Savoie the possessions of her ancestors. On the other hand, if Charles should indignantly refuse, no expense must be spared and all the influence of the Crown must be used in gaining this lawsuit. Louise was assured that she was the next heir, as these dominions had been subject to female succession before the year 1400, and had become so again by the letters patent of Louis XII. in 1498, when he settled the inheritance of Suzanne de Bourbon.

On the refusal of this marriage, war was thus openly declared, and Charles might be assured that it would only end in his ruin. He had not only to defend himself but also his mother-in-law, Anne de France, Duchesse de Bourbon, who had been Regent of France on the death of her father Louis XI. This great lady, now advanced in years—she was over sixty—in failing health, and broken-hearted by the loss of her only child, lavished upon Charles de Bourbon the affection of a devoted mother. We can imagine her fierce resentment and wounded pride on finding herself the

object of attack from Louise de Savoie whom she had adopted in her orphan childhood, and whom she had married to the Comte d'Angoulême, thus obtaining for this girl, whom she had never really liked or approved of, the high position of mother to the King of France. Louise had already shown herself ungrateful to the aunt who had done so much for her. She was jealous of the high favour with which Queen Anne (de Bretagne) had always regarded both the dowager Duchesse de Bourbon and her daughter Suzanne, Duke Charles was on such friendly terms with the present Queen Claude that she would gladly have offered him her sister Renée as his second wife, but the child princess is said to have demurred on the ground that "she could not marry a prince who was on the point of losing his domains."

The plea put forward on behalf of Louise de Savoie, that the Duchess Anne lost all her rights of possession and of dowry on the death of her daughter, was clearly against all custom and law, and the royal lady, so deeply insulted in her pride of race and her honour, appears to have forgotten the larger interests of the country over which she had once ruled, and, as a champion of the House of Bourbon only, to have urged Charles to open rebellion against the Valois on the throne. She knew the implacable nature of Louise, she foresaw that there could be but one end to this unfair lawsuit, supported by a King against his subject; for the loss of her son-in-law's possessions would surely be followed by trumped-up charges and would inevitably lead him to the scaffold. Before the

trial had even commenced, François had shown his hand by seizing the " Comté de la Marche, Carlat, and Murat . . . pretending that the permission granted to Duke Pierre for his daughter ended with her. . . ."

Anne was aware of the Emperor's overtures to Charles, and most strongly advised him to accept them, including the suggested marriage with his sister Eléanore. " My son," she is reported to have said, " consider that the House of Bourbon has already been allied with the House of Burgundy, and that during this alliance it has always flourished and been prosperous. You see the troubles we have now, and this lawsuit which only proceeds from our lack of alliances. I pray and command you to accept the alliance with the Emperor. Promise me that you will do so with all diligence and I shall die content." Mignet who quotes this, remarks thus upon it. " The daughter of Louis XI. who had governed the Kingdom of France during the minority of her brother Charles VIII.— maintaining its authority and enlarging its boundaries — had changed her maxims in changing her position. She now sought to support the greatness of the House into which she had entered and which seemed about to fall in ruins on the death of her daughter Suzanne. What the great feudal lords of the realm and all the Princes of the blood had done when their interests were opposed to the Crown, what the Dukes of Bourgogne, of Brétagne, and Louis XI. as Dauphin had recently done, that she advised the Constable of France, her son-in-law, to do."

CHAPTER VII

FRANÇOIS I. AND LOUISE DE SAVOIE LAY CLAIM TO THE VAST POSSESSIONS OF CHARLES DE BOURBON—THE FAMOUS LAWSUIT—DELAYS OF THE PARLIAMENT—SEQUESTRATION OF BOURBON'S PROPERTY BY THE QUEEN MOTHER—HER CRUEL TREATMENT OF DE SEMBLANÇAY—ADVANCES OF THE EMPEROR TO BOURBON—HIS TREATMENT AT THE FRENCH COURT—DEATH OF ANNE DE FRANCE.

THIS great lawsuit, the mighty struggle between royalty and the typical representative of the powerful feudal nobility of the realm, was one of the most critical events in the History of France. Whatever private and selfish motives François I., Louise de Savoie, and the Chancellor du Prat may have had, they were unconsciously serving the cause of that kingly prerogative which alone could make of France a united kingdom rather than a group of rival provinces, each ruled by its own sovereign lord.

They had chosen, it is true, a most perilous time to run the risk of alienating the nobility of the land in the person of the Duc de Bourbon, when all Europe was in coalition against France, and the issue of events was more than doubtful. On the other hand, Charles could not yield without being a traitor to his order and his name; the eyes of the world were upon him, and he would have shown himself a dastard to bow before

the storm. In his heart he knew himself to be the appointed victim and that his cause was hopeless from the first—for how could the Parliament dare to give sentence against the King? Even from this distance of time, we watch with breathless interest the oncoming of the fateful inevitable tragedy—the scapegoat driven out into the wilderness laden with the sins of past ages—a needful sacrifice to prepare the way for a new order of unity and strength.

When we consider the splendid position and immense domain of Charles de Bourbon, we are compelled to own that so powerful a vassal was a constant danger to the Crown itself. The mere enumeration of his dignities places Charles before us a sovereign prince. He was Duc de Bourbon, Auvergne, and Châtelleraut, Comte de Clermont, Montpensier, Forez, La Marche and de Gien; Dauphin d'Auvergne; Vicomte de Carlat and Murat; Sire de Beaujeu, de Combraille, de Mercoeur, d'Annonay, de la Roche-en-Regnier and de Bourbon-Lancy. These vast estates were governed after the manner of a real kingdom. The centre of the government was fixed at Moulins, an ancient city, well placed on the navigable river the Allier, in a fertile plain; the home of the Bourbon princes since Robert, the son of St Louis, took up his abode there. Within a few miles was the stately castle of Chantelle, the strongest fortress in the country—defended by a rocky precipice, a river, and strong fortifications; and at the same time the most beautiful palace in France.

It was the favourite home of Anne de France, who

made it a treasure house of rare and beautiful works of art, of splendid furniture, tapestries, pictures, and a priceless library of books and illuminated manuscripts. Yet, this was only one of the many magnificent châteaux of the House of Bourbon. The administration of Charles de Bourbon was carried out with kingly pomp and circumstance. He had his Court in which he was surrounded by his feudal vassals, and many other nobles attracted by his princely generosity and the sumptuous splendour of his hospitality. The Duke maintained an immense household ; a regular company of " archers of the guard " with their captain ; chamberlains, equerries, squires, gentlemen and pensioners of his household, twenty-four pages, heralds-at-arms, cup-bearers, stewards, secretaries, and a vast crowd of menial attendants. He had the right to administer justice, with the reserve of an appeal to the royal courts ; he appointed a chancellor, he had his own pleaders. This great lord had even the right to levy soldiers in the greater part of his dominions, and this was the more possible to him for he was almost as rich as the King. As a final touch to his magnificence, Charles de Bourbon was a patron of art and literature, and kept in his pay both writers and artists.

More than this, as the head of the House of Bourbon and of the blood-royal of France by direct descent from St Louis, this first subject of the realm was so perilously near to succession of the throne that François I., head of the House of Valois, could never forget or forgive it. His fall was inevitable, but the means by which it was accomplished were brutal.

Having once grasped the main issue of the gigantic struggle, we are at leisure to follow out the details of this unique lawsuit between the crowned and the uncrowned king. The case was brought before the Parliament of Paris in January 1522, and the first thing we notice is that the Parliament, fearing the public opinion of the country, did not show any zeal in supporting the Crown against a great vassal. The fiscal exactions of Du Prat, and the high-handed contempt of François I. for any opposition to his extravagant demands, had roused a feeling of irritation in the legal body. But all resistance was useless, for the King's will carried all before it.

When the case began, two famous lawyers, Bouchard and Montholon pleaded on the side of the defendants, the Duc de Bourbon and Madame Anne de France, while Poyet (afterwards made Chancellor of France) was counsel for Louise de Savoie, and the Advocate-General, Lizet, represented the King's claim. It was a terribly long and wearisome suit, as it was the interest of the plaintiffs' cause to spead the interest over the greatest possible number of reclamations: "un vrai farrago d'allégations," says one witness. "On ne peut ennuyer plus savamment," says Dreux du Radier.

The following are the important facts. On the marriage of Jean I., Duc de Bourbon with Marie de Berry, in the year 1400, the duchy of Bourbon and the counties of Clermont and Forez, coming from the side of Bourbon; and the duchy of Auvergne and county of Montpensier coming from the side of Berry, were formed into an appanage which was declared to

descend to heirs male, King Charles VI. being a party to this contract. Before this date, some of these possessions had been an appanage, which might be inherited by females. An appanage returns to the Crown when there is a failure of heirs pointed out by its special constitution. No disposition by the holder for the time being could defeat that reversion.

The succession of the Dukes of Bourbon is made plain by the accompanying genealogical tables. (See Tables I. and II.)

We thus come down to 1498 when Pierre II., Duc de Bourbon, obtained from King Louis XII. letters patent, authorising his daughter Suzanne and her descendants to succeed him. These letters were an invasion of the rights of the Counts of Montpensier, who were entitled to the succession as heirs male under the arrangements of 1400. The King appears to have been aware of this for, on the death of Pierre de Bourbon, he consulted with his great lawyers on the subject of succession in various dominions, and he definitely advised the Duchess Anne to marry her daughter Suzanne to young Charles (now heir of the House of Montpensier by the death of his father and elder brother). Louis XII. quite appreciated the rights of the young prince. He showed this still more plainly the following year, 1505, when at the marriage of Charles and Suzanne, a contract was carefully drawn up in which he took part, by which husband and wife make a mutual donation of all their property and dominions to the survivor, in case there are no children. The kindly old King certainly intended that this should

settle the matter, and end the controversy. In this contract, Madame Anne de France also left all her property to the survivor of those two and to their heirs. As Montholon pointed out, " in this marriage treaty it is clearly shown that the defendant (Charles of Bourbon) is really the true duke and lord of the Bourbon property, for he assigns to the said dame, Suzanne de Bourbon, 10,000 livres de rente as a dowry, to be raised upon his duchy of Auvergne and county of Clermont, which is clearly the deed of a proprietor. He also bestows upon Madame Anne de France for her dowry, the sum of 10,000 livres tournois from his duchy of Bourbonnais. . . ."

When Suzanne de Bourbon died in 1521, at the age of twenty-nine, she ratified all the clauses of her marriage contract, and made her husband her sole legatee. After her daughter's death, Anne de France also left all that she possessed to her son-in-law Charles de Bourbon. Of course these wills, as far as the appanage is concerned, must be put out of the case, for of that they had no power to dispose.

As for Louise de Savoie who claimed by female succession—this she could only do by treating as null and void, not only the letters patent of Louis XII. in 1498, but also the arrangement of 1400 at the marriage of Jean de Bourbon and Marie de Berry. When the advocate of Louise brought forward a genealogy of the children of Charles I., Duc de Bourbon, and pointed out that the King's mother was the daughter of his seventh child Marguerite who married the Duc de Savoie, while Suzanne was the daughter

of his second son Pierre, and therefore the two ladies were first cousins, and Louise should inherit, rather than Suzanne's mother Anne de France;—Bouchard replied that according to the written law *vivente matre*, the goods of the daughter cannot go to a first cousin, this being also against the custom of the land.

In this long and tedious trial, there is a contest over every different portion of the inheritance and every conceivable quibble is brought into use. Thus the fathers of Jean de Bourbon and Marie de Berry, who give their broad lands to the males descending from this marriage, speak good, clear, sensible old French, while the notaries who draw up the deed turn it into bad Latin, which they probably do not understand, and get confused with an ablative absolute which the advocate for Louise de Savoie tries to twist into a conditional meaning! To this Montholon, on behalf of Duke Charles, made reply that, in the language of noble princes, we look for the clear intention without seeking subtle devices. He also goes on to point out that the marriage contract of Pierre Duc de Bourbon and Anne of France was only a repetition of that much quoted one of Jean de Bourbon and Marie de Berry, "that an appanage in fact remained inalienable," and he insists that if Louis XII. had known of this arrangement of Louis XI., he would never have granted the letters patent of 1498 to Suzanne.

Now this probable ignorance of King Louis XII. would have been an excellent ground for seeking the recall of those letters and the cancelling of their

registration ; but this course does appear to have been taken. However, the sequestration of the Bourbon lands was so ably opposed that the Court, not daring to commit the injustice which the King so strongly urged, took the timid course of deferring their decision, and ordering that the lawsuit should be put off until the " morrow of St Martin of the coming winter." As this decision was given in the month of August, it seemed to leave a breathing space, yet by this time the Constable of France knew that for him all hope was at an end. But he had not yet reached the depth of his humiliation. As Laval tells us : " Madame, the mother of the King, too impatient to wait until the month of November, made such violent efforts to obtain the decree of sequestration that she succeeded before the close of Parliament in that same month of August. This decree filled the measure of Bourbon's despair. He knew that the King was as much his enemy as Madame his mother, and moreover, deprived of all his possessions, titles, dignities and even of his great offices and emoluments from the King, he knew not where this matter would end. . . ."

Charles had indeed cause for apprehension when he remembered the cruel vengeance of which Louise de Savoie was capable. A flagrant instance of her unscrupulous methods had only just occurred. The French army had been defeated in Italy, and when Lautrec, the general, returned, the King in his bitter disappointment, refused to see him. But Lautrec, eager to justify himself, found means of approaching his sovereign and complained of this treatment.

François replied that he could not forgive him for the loss of Milan. Upon this Lautrec explained that His Majesty was to blame, as he had never sent the money which was so urgently needed. The army had not been paid for eighteen months, and the 16,000 Swiss who had joined him at Monza had so clamoured for battle or pay, that he, Lautrec, against his better judgment, had been compelled to attack the enemy in a strong position at Bicocca, near Milan. The result had been that crushing defeat.

The King indignantly replied that he had sent 400,000 crowns as soon as they were asked for, but Lautrec insisted that he had never received the money. The Treasurer of France, the Lord of Semblançay was sent for in haste, and admitted the King's command, but added that when the money was about to be sent, Madame, the King's mother, had taken the 400,000 crowns for herself. The story was so incredible that François hurried to the apartments of Louise and told her of the accusation, angrily accusing her of thus causing the loss of his duchy of Milan. She was confronted with de Semblançay and was obliged to own that she took the money, but she vowed that it was her own property, savings upon her revenue. The unfortunate Treasurer repeated his assertion, but Louise violently accused him of fraud and peculation, and was supported by the Chancellor du Prat, who hated de Semblançay, against whom a criminal suit was soon brought ; he was tried and condemned by judges chosen by his foes, and ultimately died on the scaffold in 1527. Such was the fate of an honest

man who had served four kings with honour and devotion ![1]

This disgraceful story is told by many historians, but the fullest details are given by the scholarly Martin du Bellay, who died in 1559, and who is accused by Montaigne of being " a special pleader for François I. against the Emperor rather than an impartial historian."

While the great lawsuit was in process, and the faintest hope remained, Charles de Bourbon actually remained at the Court of François I., although he must have been acutely conscious of the hostile atmosphere which surrounded him. He could not fail to notice the secret satisfaction of envious rivals at the painful position in which the first gentleman of France, after the King, found himself. His partisans amongst the nobility, who looked upon him as the champion of their order, could scarcely dare to show their sympathy. As the iron entered into his soul, Charles was slowly making up his mind. Each day the shadows darkened around him and, as Mignet says: " The ill-will and the resistless power of his enemies made him fear complete spoliation; ruin would be added to disgrace, and this iniquitous persecution set the seal upon all the injuries and affronts which he had endured. His proud soul revolted at the thought, and while maintaining his rights, he prepared his revenge."

Chateaubriand thought the same; he quite under-

[1] See Du Bellay, Béthune, Varillas, Brantôme, Bouchet and other historians. The people detested Louise de Savoie for her avarice. On her death 1,500,000 crowns were found in her coffers.

stood that the Constable's high position was a part of himself and that he could not live without it. "He represented the power, the life and the customs of a great vassal of the Crown, in olden times."

In this crisis of his fate, Bourbon's thoughts naturally turned towards the Emperor who had already made several advances to him, and who had recently sent a message to him by his ambassador in France, when he saw which way the lawsuit was likely to end. "Monsieur," said Philibert Naturelli to the Constable, "you are now free to marry; the Emperor, my master, has a sister, about whom I am commissioned to speak to you." The Duke appears to have only thanked Charles V. without giving any definite reply. But later in the summer of 1522, when his position had become more desperate, Bourbon sent his devoted friend, the Lord of Vauguyon to reopen negotiations with Adrian de Croy, the Spanish minister. An alliance with the Emperor could only mean open rebellion against the King of France. "A victim of royal injustice, Charles looked upon himself as the future liberator of his country; he was rising against the disorderly, arbitrary, extravagant government of a prince given up to his pleasures and the slave of every passion."[1]

This was, in fact, the view taken a little later, in January of the next year, by so cool-headed a minister as Cardinal Wolsey in his reply to Thomas Boleyn, ambassador at Madrid. He praises the "virtuous prince Charles de Bourbon who, seeing the evil

[1] Mignet.

conduct of the King and the enormous abuses in the kingdom, wishes to reform it and to improve the condition of the unfortunate people."

François I. heard of the intercourse between the Emperor and the Duc de Bourbon. We wonder why he did not break off the lawsuit and seek to win back the Constable. Yet having once begun it, probably he shrank from owning himself in the wrong; besides, as King of France and a Valois, he was too eager to check and destroy this House of Bourbon, which was a menace to him personally, as well as to the Royal authority of which he was the representative.

Charles continued to attend the Court. "One day he arrived at the hour when the King and Queen Claude were at table in different rooms. The Duke went first to pay his respects to Queen Claude, who had always remained his friend, and when the King presently entered, rose respectfully to do him homage. François addressed him roughly: "It appears that you are married or on the point of being so. Is this true?" Charles replied that he was not, whereupon the King retorted that it was so and he knew it. He also added that he had heard of all his plots with the Emperor, and repeated several times that he would remember it.

"Then, Sire, this is a threat," replied the Duke; "I have not deserved such treatment." After dinner, he returned to his own house, situated near the Louvre, and many gentlemen accompanied him thither in his train." [1] Michelet goes farther still, he writes: "All

[1] Cotton MS. C. folio 117. British Museum.

the nobles followed him." When later, the Emperor told the story of this interview to Sir Thomas Boleyn, the English ambassador expressed his wonder that the King should have suffered the Constable to depart. "He could not have prevented him"; said Charles V., "all the nobility was on his side."

Before the end of that fatal year, Charles de Bourbon received another blow; the loss of the great Anne de France, Duchesse de Bourbon, who for so many years had lavished on him all the affection of the most devoted mother. She died on November 14, 1522, advising him, with her last breath, to shake the dust of an ungrateful country from his feet, and to join the Emperor Charles. Worn out with many labours and much sorrow rather than age, for she was but sixty-one, the noble Princess, last of her race, was borne with stately pomp and ceremony to her grave; deeply lamented by her subjects to whom she had been a wise and generous ruler. Anne de France was laid to rest in the splendid chapel of the Bourbon princes, within the Abbey church of Souvigny by the side of her beloved daughter Suzanne.

Henceforth, Charles de Bourbon was indeed alone, with no human love to support and strengthen him; alone, as on a mountain peak with his own indomitable pride. We see him at once the sombre spectator and impassive sculptor of his tragic story, which he is to carve out with his own sword. Like another Coriolanus, his fiery spirit could not stoop to flattery and Court manœuvres, could not endure to live a maimed and disgraced existence, poisoned by his own con-

tempt ; and chose rebellion rather than a tame and ignoble submission. He had suffered too deeply to endure such agony for long, and when driven to extremity, the great Constable of France made his final choice without one backward glance.

It is instructive to read what a thoughtful historian like Merimée has to say on the subject. " We must not judge Charles with the severity which a Frenchman of the present day would deserve who sold his services to the enemy. In his time the nobles asserted their complete independence and considered themselves free to change their suzerain when they had reason to complain of the master whom the chance of birth had given them. . . . Can we wonder at this in France of the sixteenth century when, during three civil wars, both sides had called in the foreigner to fight for their quarrels ? . . ." Or again, if we take the remarks of a self-complacent Court chronicler like Brantôme, who was himself riding over to Spain to give his services against France, when an accident to his spirited white horse crippled him for life and sent him home to his bed, henceforth a good patriot and a popular writer.

He says : " It is all very well for those scrupulous philosophers ! . . . If I make good use of my sword, I gain a splendid reputation, but if I keep it in the scabbard, I die of hunger without glory and without honour. . . . What could Monsieur de Bourbon have done if he had not acted as he did ? He would have been taken prisoner, tried, and had his head cut off like the Constable de Saint-Pôl, and have been dishonoured for ever, he and his race. Instead of this,

he died a glorious death, if ever man did, having avenged his injuries and affronts, taken prisoner on the open battle-field his King who would have put him to death, and found that courtesy in a foreign land which his own had denied him. Here we see the truth of the old saying: 'Omne solum forti patria est, ut piscibus œquor.'"

Dreux du Radier says of the Constable at this crisis of his fate: "With distinguished talent in war, showing as much prudence as valour, thinking much, speaking little, magnanimous, generous, adored by his army, respected by his equals, in short, worthy by a thousand splendid qualities of the blood of Saint Louis, Bourbon was proud and high-spirited and would carve his way only by his own conduct, owing nothing to royal favour. He was one of those men who are born to decide the fate of a country by the side they embrace, and for whom ostracism was established in Athens."

CHAPTER VIII

CHARLES DE BOURBON IS FINALLY DRIVEN TO REBELLION—HE RETIRES TO MOULINS—RECEIVES THE EMPEROR'S DELEGATES—MAKES A TREATY WITH THEM—THE KING FOLLOWS HIM TO MOULINS—DRIVEN TO EXTREMITY, THE DUC DE BOURBON TAKES FINAL LEAVE OF CHANTELLE—TRAVELS IN DISGUISE THROUGH AUVERGNE, ON TO CHAMBÉRY AND BESANÇON.

MEANTIME while Charles de Bourbon still delayed and hesitated before taking the final step, he was actually sent on a military expedition by the King to attack and disperse a band of adventurers who were ravaging with impunity the borders of Champagne and Burgundy, towards Paris. This he had soon accomplished with his usual promptness and success, and returned to his Castle of Moulins, where he was shortly visited by two gentlemen of the Court. The Constable asked them definitely what the King intended to do and what message he had sent. He was told in general terms that François I. certainly did not wish to deprive him of his estates, but when he proposed to send back a letter thanking the King for his good words, the courtiers refused to take it. He soon found out that they had really come to find out what forces he had, and that they were no better than spies. Tidings also reached him that the Chancellor du Prat was

strongly advising that he should be reduced to the position of a poor gentleman with four thousand livres de rente.

From that time he fully understood that he could put no trust in the King, or in the Parliament, and he remarked with natural bitterness that "he was waiting for news of his trial to know whether he was going to be Duke or simply Charles." He also began to speak openly of sending back to François I. his collar of the Order of Saint-Michael and his sword of Constable, because he would rather live poor out of France than be held of such small account there.

It was during this time of painful suspense that he heard of the arrival at Bourg-en-Bresse of Adrian de Croy, lord of Beaurain, the Emperor's Chamberlain, and felt that the moment for decision had arrived. It was his final opportunity. In order not to arouse suspicion, he took the pretext of a pilgrimage to Nôtre-Dame-du-Puy and established himself in the most mountainous part of his domains, at Montbrison, the capital of the Haut-Forez, high up in the hills amongst the fir-trees. It was from here that he sent for Beaurain. Two devoted gentlemen of his Court brought the messenger with his companions through the principality of Dombes and Beaujolais as far as Montbrison, where they arrived on the evening of the 17th of July. Beaurain was shut up for two days in a chamber near that of the Duc de Bourbon, and he only came out at night for a mysterious conference.

Every precaution was taken, although Charles believed himself to be surrounded by faithful friends.

Chabannes, Bishop of Puy, and the Bishop of Autun were with him, also his three chamberlains, his stewards, the captains of his men-at-arms, and a whole crowd of young lords of the Auvergne, of Forez, of the Beaujolais and elsewhere, attached to his person, devoted to his projects and ready to take arms for him.

Above all, there was his most eager partizan whom he had summoned from the banks of the Rhone; Jean de Poitiers, lord of Saint-Vallier, comte de Valentinois, etc. He belonged to one of the noblest families of France, had rendered great services to the Crown, and held important offices. He had been Governor of Dauphiny under Louis XII., and had fought in Italy under François I., and had spent there 100,000 crowns which had never been paid back to him. He complained of being neglected by the King, and of having been deceived by Louise de Savoie who, notwithstanding her promise, had never restored to him his duchy of Valentinois. He was the father of the famous Diane de Poitiers, who had recently married Louis de Brezé, High Seneschal of Normandy.

It was to Saint-Vallier that Bourbon first revealed the whole plot suggested by the Emperor, under a vow of secrecy. "Cousin, will you swear on the true cross that you will never repeat what I tell you?" Then his friend placed his hand on the reliquary which the Constable always wore round his neck, and took a solemn oath. It was in the presence of Saint Vallier that during the night of the 18th July, Charles made his secret contract with Beaurain who was brought

into the chamber at eleven o'clock at night with the usual mystery. The Emperor's letters were first given to the Constable. This is what he wrote:

"COUSIN,—I send you the lord of Beaurain, my Chamberlain, who will give you a message from me. I pray that you will believe him as myself. And in doing this you will find me your good cousin and friend.

CHARLES."

Adrian de Croy, Lord of Beaurain, had been engaged for some months in the building up of this great conspiracy both in Spain and in England, where Henry VIII. required much diplomatic management. He was very zealous at first, until he realized that actual war with France would entail very heavy expense and a large armament, which was at that moment required in Scotland, and to put down the insurrection of the "White Rose." However, early in May he told the Spanish Ambassador that "in this matter of Bourbon he would heartily join with the Emperor and pay half the money necessary for the horsemen and foot-soldiers which the Constable was to raise. Negotiations had been carried on at Valladolid and in London, but this was de Croy's first meeting with Bourbon, who had already promised by letter to declare himself and to join the army of invasion, opening the towns in his dominions to the confederates.

On that eventful summer night, in the Castle of Montbrison, Beaurain fully set forth his instructions, both from Charles V. and Henry VIII., and then

drew up the treaty of marriage and of confederacy. Bourbon was promised that he should marry the Emperor's sister Eléonore, late Queen of Portugal, or else the Infanta Catalina, with a dowry of 200,000 crowns ; and on his side he was to swear that he would combine with the Emperor against all the world. He was willing to attack François I., but he refused to treat Henry VIII. as King of France. Bourbon offered to be his ally but not to acknowledge himself as his subject.

A rising within the Kingdom was to support the invasion from without, at the same time. Charles V. was to enter France by Narbonne, with 18,000 Spaniards, 10,000 landsknechte, 10,000 men-at-arms, and 4000 horses ; while at the same time the King of England was to descend upon the western coast of the Kingdom with 15,000 foot-soldiers and 1600 horsemen, who were to be joined shortly by 3000 foot-soldiers and 3000 men-at-arms from the Netherlands. This invasion was to take place when François I. left Lyons, where he was to be in August on his way to Italy. It was arranged that ten days after the combined attack of the Emperor and the King of England, Bourbon was to take the field with his own army which he was to have in readiness, and 10,000 landsknechte who were to be sent from Germany by way of Franche-comté.

This treaty was drawn up by de Croy's secretary, and two copies were made, of which one was to remain with the Constable and the other was to be taken back to the Emperor. The two papers were signed

ISABELLE DE BOURGOGNE. SISTER OF THE EMPEROR CHARLES V
By Jan Gossaert (Mabuse)
By permission of M. Charles Leon Cardon

on the one side by de Croy in the name of Charles V., and on the other by Charles de Bourbon and his friend Saint-Vallier, all taking oath on the Gospel that the agreement should be faithfully kept. When this was accomplished, Bourbon sent for his steward Saint-Bonnet towards midnight, in order to give him a commission to Spain as his representative. Having first made him take an oath of secrecy and obedience, he said: "I wish you to go to the Emperor and to tell him that I humbly commend myself to his good favour, and pray that he will give me his sister in marriage, and that in doing me this honour, he will find me his servitor, his good brother and his friend."

Saint-Bonnet was then presented to de Croy and commanded to obey him in everything. They started together that very night, an hour or two before dawn, with the intention of reaching Genoa and embarking from thence. They crossed the mountains of the Forez, guided by the Lords of Lallière and du Peloux, who went with them beyond the principality of Dombes and almost as far as Bresse. De Croy wrote several despatches in cypher which he sent off, together with a copy of the treaty, to Henry VIII., and also to the Archduke Ferdinand, the Emperor's brother, asking him to raise at once the 10,000 landsknechte who were to be placed under the Duc de Bourbon at the moment of the combined invasion of France. He reached Genoa safely and crossed to Spain as quickly as possible.

The most intimate account of the whole episode of the secret conference at Montbrison is given by Saint-

Vallier at his trial, a few months later. He gives the most curious and minute details ; thus, he is not sure about seeing the seal of the Emperor on the treaty, as he did not have his spectacles. He remembers the day was Thursday because he had brought some partridges for dinner, and the next day being " maigre " was Friday. . . . But when he goes on to relate that after de Croy was gone, he tried to persuade the Constable to give up the whole scheme, we have only his word for so wild a suggestion. He adds the reply of Charles : " Cousin, what can I do ? The King and Madame have done me so much wrong and wish to destroy me ; they have already taken away property and they wish to put me to death." He was so distressed that Saint-Vallier said presently : " Monsieur, we will say no more about it ; let us have a game." So they went with the Bishop of Autun and the Sieur de Chamand to play at " flux," a very favourite card-game of the period. It was played by four people ; each player takes three cards, and he who has all his cards of the same colour or the most points, wins the stake.

Charles de Bourbon was well aware that it was now too late to draw back, and that all that remained for him was to persevere in his risky enterprise, however terrible might be the consequences. He saw to the fortification and provisioning of his two chief strongholds, Chantelle and Carlat, and began to make active preparations for war, sending for the Captain of his men-at-arms, la Clayette, and for Saint-Saphorin who had served under him in Italy. He next sent

Antoine de Chabannes, the Bishop of Puy, to ask the Duke of Savoy, his kinsman, if he would join him. He had persuaded Aymard de Prie, who was in command at Dijon, to admit 1000 foot-soldiers into that city. Charles firmly believed that, at the critical moment, he would be joined by nearly 2000 nobles who had given him their word. He had great hopes from two young Norman gentlemen, Matignon and d'Argouges, whom he had treated with the utmost generosity and loaded with his favours. He wrote and asked them to meet at Vendôme his agent Lurcy, who would tell them all his plans. By their means he hoped to prepare the way for the descent of the English army on Normandy. Bourbon shows the most perfect confidence in all his friends, yet we can scarcely wonder that, where he trusted most he was destined to meet with betrayal.

It was at this time that he fell ill again of a tertian fever, and had to leave the Castle of Montbrison carried in a litter. He was going to await events at Moulins and to rest awhile before the day of action, when François I. should have set forth to reconquer the Duchy of Milan. The King had already made all his preparations for this expedition from which he hoped so much. The people murmured at the reckless rapacity with which he had collected money, for he had imposed enormous taxes, mortgaged the property of the Crown, and even borrowed precious treasures from the abbeys and churches. Admiral Bonnivet, in command of the army until the King's arrival, had preceded him to Lyons, Lescun was sent to defend

Languedoc, and Lautrec was on the borders of Gascony —as precautions against a Spanish attack. It was arranged that during her son's absence Louise de Savoie should be Regent, a name which has always clung to her.

Early in August, François I. left Fontainebleau and reached Gien, where he received a warning from the Sieur d'Escars, who was deep in the Bourbon conspiracy, but seems to have had a touch of remorse. He is reported to have said: "If you were as suspicious as King Louis XI., you would have some doubts about my lord Constable, for I hear that he is very eager for news from England, Germany, and Spain, which he could very well do without." The King already had his suspicions which were soon to become a certainty. He had arrived at Pierre-le-Moustier on August 16, when he received a letter in duplicate, brought by two couriers for greater security. It had been delayed by first passing through the hands of the Regent Louise who was at Cléry, and had received it from the Grand-Seneschal of Normandy.

To explain this important communication we must go back to the meeting at Vendôme between the Sieur de Lurcy and the two Norman gentlemen, Matignon and d'Argouges. Bourbon's messenger invited the young men to a secluded room of the "*Hotellerie des Trois-Rois*, and after having made them swear secrecy, he revealed to them the whole conspiracy. Quite convinced of their sincerity, he promised to give them the government of Normandy after the English invasion, when the Constable, having marched to Paris,

would be proclaimed governor and King. François I. was to be taken prisoner between Moulins and Lyons, and for his part, Lurcy said, he would have put him to death, but this the Constable vehemently opposed and proposed that the King should be kept in honourable captivity at Chantelle. The two gentlemen appear to have been taken by surprise, and they both indignantly refused to take part in the plot. Having sworn not to reveal it, they compounded with honour and conscience by telling the whole story in confession to the Bishop of Lisieux. He on his part feeling that, as a good patriot, the interest of the State came before any ecclesiastical scruples, at once sent the news to de Brezé, the Grand Seneschal, who forwarded it, as we have seen, to François I.

The situation was full of peril and the least hesitation might be fatal. Louise wrote at once to the Seneschal with the order to bring the two Norman gentlemen to her at once under a safe escort. She also sent messengers in every direction to find out what was on foot. As for the King, he treated the matter with much coolness, and wrote a long letter to her mother, telling her in a light-hearted way what he proposed to do. He had been on the point of starting for Moulins with a small escort, but now he will pretend that he has hurt his leg and will remain another day at St Pierre, while he collects a good company of landsknechte round him and also the four hundred archers under d'Aubigny. He will send orders in every direction to make the roads safe, and take care that the King of England may know what reception he

will meet if he should dare to land in Normandy. . . . He will also go and meet Bourbon himself, before he suspects anything.

When the Constable heard of the King's arrival at Moulins, he sent him a letter excusing himself for not waiting on his Majesty as he was kept to his chamber by illness. François I. meantime, had a large force with him, installed himself in the Castle of which he took the keys, set sentinels, and caused the town to be watched by a strong guard, which was changed three times in the night. It was the next day, when all these precautions had been taken, that he entered the chamber of Charles de Bourbon.

This is the account the King gives in his letter to his mother: ". . . . Yesterday I slept at Moulins where I found M. de Bourbon very ill, and I do not believe that it was feigned, for I had sent Maître André to see him the day before, and had privately insisted that he should find out the truth. And this morning he and all my doctors have told me positively that if the Sieur de Bourbon does not take care of himself, they would not be in his case for anything! His face is very much changed. I spoke to him about coming with me, which he seemed to wish very much, and promised on his word that as soon as he could bear to travel in his litter, he would set forth at once; it would probably be in a week. I would certainly have taken him with me then, but all my doctors told me that I could not do so without killing him. . . ." Du Bellay professes to relate what passed in that memorable interview. He says that the "good merciful King" told

the Constable that he had heard all about the plot which de Croy had suggested, but he did not believe that his cousin would have listened, save for the fear of losing his estates. The King assured Charles that he and his mother would give them all back to him if the law-suit went against him. He need not trouble about it, but should make ready to accompany him in his journey to Italy. The "wise and prudent" Sieur de Bourbon seems to have quite a match in duplicity for his sovereign. He owned that Adrian de Croy had sought him on the part of the Emperor, but was it likely that he should have listened to any proposed conspiracy against his Lord? He would certainly join the King at Lyons as soon as the doctors allowed him to travel. . . . It was a most friendly conversation, and the King is even said to have offered Bourbon a share in the command of his army in Italy.

After this interview which can have deceived neither of the two princes, François I. lost no time in making his way, with the utmost precaution and a strong escort, to Lyons where his presence was urgently needed. But he was by no means satisfied about the Constable, and he left his trusted vassal, de Warthy, to send constant reports of all that took place, to keep a strict watch over the suspected rebel and never leave him until he could be brought in safety to Lyons.

The path of transgressors is hard, and having once entered into this course of deception, Charles de Bourbon found it impossible to draw back. Not only his dominions and his high position, but his very life was now at stake. It was impossible for him to trust the

King's offers and promises, which no doubt were made in order to effect his arrest more easily. He delayed for another fortnight his departure towards Lyons, where the King was impatiently awaiting him, and it is more than probable that his continued illness was in a great measure feigned. When at the urgent request of François, de Warthy insisted on an interview, he had to wait four or five hours in an outer chamber of the Castle, and was then shown into a "closet" where the Constable was lying on his bed.

The invalid sent a message to the King that he was a little better, and had been out for a few minutes on his mule that morning; when he had become more accustomed to the air in his park of Moulins, he hoped to be able to travel in a few days. Warthy set off at once to Lyons with this news, travelling all day and night and reaching the King at the hour of his "lever." François I. waited five days longer, probably completing his plans, and then sent Warthy definitely to fetch Bourbon, whom he met near Varennes, about fifty miles from Moulins, whence he had travelled by easy journeys in his litter. Warthy had strict orders not to leave the Constable again until they were safely at Lyons. They travelled together to La Palice about twenty miles on, and stayed to rest in the castle there. All that Thursday night, Warthy heard constant moving about and was told in the morning that Bourbon was much worse and in terrible pain. Asking about the invalid's pulse, he was told that the doctor had not ventured to feel it, as the Duke

would have been so much alarmed that he would have thought himself dying.[1]

On the Friday morning, after he had heard Mass and dined, Charles sent for De Warthy and led him to hope that after all he would be able to travel on the morrow. But again there was constant movement in the Castle during the night, and the King's envoy being permitted to approach the sick man's bedside was told that he was much worse, but that it was not so much death that troubled him but being unable to serve the King.

"My doctors advise me to try my native air," he added. "Tell His Majesty that when I am a little stronger, I will go to him."

Wrathy knew what his master would think of this and exclaimed that he would be terribly annoyed. Again he hurried off at his utmost speed and reached Lyons incredibly soon, being shown into the King's presence at midnight, with his alarming news which François took at their true value. Late as it was, he at once ordered the arrest of Saint-Vallier, who held an important command of one hundred gentlemen of his household, and who had supped with him that very evening. He also arrested Aymard de Prie, Antoine de Chabannes Bishop of Puy, and several others whom he had cause to suspect. Warthy declares that he was sent again with a final message to the Constable, to inform him that until that moment the King had not believed in his treachery, but that even now he im-

[1] All these curious details are given from the Deposition of Perault de Warthy.

plored Bourbon to think of his honour and to justify himself, giving his royal promise that he would forget everything and treat him with mercy rather than justice.

This was playing out the farce to the very end, for the rebel had no chance of repentance, as at the same time François sent the Bastard of Savoy and the Maréchal de la Palice with 4000 foot-soldiers and a large number of horsemen to take possession of the person of the Constable, while other generals were ordered to scour all the land of the Bourbonnais and Auvergne to put down the attempt at rebellion.

Meantime Bourbon continued to carry out his engagements with the Emperor, although he knew that he was betrayed on every side. He had ordered the levies in his States, and on the very day when he started apparently towards Lyon, August 31, he had sent his archer Baudemanche to find out if the 4000 foot-soldiers had been levied by Saint-Saphorin. When he parted from Warthy at La Palice on September 6, he returned as far as Gayete where he gave an audience to Sir John Russell sent by Henry VIII., Chateau, a secretary of the Emperor's, and Loquingham, a Spanish captain. They had been conducted in safety from Bourg-en-Bresse through dangers on every side, and had escaped the companies advancing to seize the Constable. Another treaty was signed that night between Henry VIII. and the Duc de Bourbon. It was settled that the King of England should land in Picardy while the Emperor invaded Languedoc, and

HENRY VIII
(From a Lithograph after Holbein by T. R. Way)

that Henry VIII. should supply the 100,000 crowns for the part payment of the Constable's landsknechte. But still Bourbon steadily refused to recognize the rights of the English King to the crown of France, or to take an oath of allegiance to him.

When the foreign agents had departed on their various errands, Charles decided that he must lose no time in seeking the protection of his strongest fortress, that of Chantelle. He thought that he might hold it until the arrival of his landsknechte and of the allies, for it was the general opinion that Chantelle was impregnable. He started from Gayete in a litter, but when he crossed the Allier at Varennes by the ferry, he was riding a bay horse on which he accomplished the whole journey of eighteen miles without a rest, reaching Chantelle at one in the afternoon. Warthy who was sent in pursuit, was told by the ferryman at Varennes that the Constable had crossed the river on horseback, wearing a robe lined with fur and a quilted silk hood. Having sent word to the King, his messenger hurried on to Chantelle and arrived there an hour after the Duke. He sent in word of his arrival and was admitted after a time to the Castle, where Bourbon received him with a smile. "Welcome, Monsieur de Warthy, you have soon overtaken me." "My Lord, your spurs have served you well!" was the reply. He tried to point out the King's kind intentions, but the Constable interrupted him by showing that he knew how eagerly he was being pursued by an armed force, and how he had been betrayed, adding: "That is why I have come to this little house

to wait until the King will listen to me. But now I am tired and wish to rest."

When this unwelcome visitor was out of the way, Bourbon held a hasty consultation with his friends as to whether he had better remain at Chantelle and defend himself against the approaching army, or seek a refuge in one of his mountain castles. On examination, it was thought very doubtful if the fortress, notwithstanding its fifteen pieces of artillery, would be able to withstand a determined siege, and the Constable was advised to make good his escape while there was yet time. Meanwhile Warthy had dined with the gentlemen of the household, and when he presented himself, the Duke gave him an open letter to the King and two others to the Grand Master and Chabannes, with which the King's agent reluctantly departed without definite news of the fugitive's plans,

Bourbon must have spent most of his last hours at Chantelle in writing to the King, Louise de Savoie, Marguerite d'Alençon; to his sister Louise de Bourbon and others. This is what he wrote to François I. :—

" A mon très redouté et souverain Seigneur.

" MONSEIGNEUR,

" I have written you fully by Perrault de Warthy. Now I send you M. d'Autun (the Bishop) in order that he may make you understand the desire I have to serve you. I implore you, Monseigneur, to believe what he will tell you from me, and I assure you on my honour that I will not fail you Monseigneur, I pray God to give you a good and long life.

"Written in our house of Chantelle, this 7 of September.

"Your very humble and very obedient subject and servitor,

"CHARLES."

To this was joined a little memorandum in his own hand. ". . . But may it please the King to restore him his goods; Mgr. de Bourbon promises to serve the King with all his heart wherever and whenever he pleases."

But in point of fact he had so little trust in all the King's promises that he said to the Bishop of Autun in taking leave of him: "Adieu, my Bishop, I am going to reach Carlat and thence on my way to Spain."

His other letters were all in the same strain; a final and pathetic appeal that any faults might be forgiven him and that His Majesty might be persuaded to give him back his honours and possessions. When we read all these last words of the unfortunate prince, hastily written or dictated before leaving his home and country for ever, we cannot help thinking that he still had some vague hope in the success of this last desperate attempt to win the King's pardon, and that it was not merely for the sake of calming his own scruples. But it was a forlorn hope indeed, for the bitter end was at hand.

We are expressly told by du Bellay that Bourbon did not leave Chantelle until he received news of the Bishop of Autun's arrest by the Bastard of Savoy,

Grand Master of France. He had arrived as far as la Pacauldière on his way to the King at Lyons, when he was taken prisoner with all his escort. In vain the Bishop pleaded for his friend, repeating : " Let His Majesty give him back his lands and his houses, and he will be well served by Monseigneur the Constable."

It was on Tuesday, September 8, that Bourbon started from his splendid home, in the dead of night, only twelve hours after his arrival, riding a mule and followed by 240 horsemen. He took with him nearly 30,000 gold crowns placed in his saddle-bags, divided amongst his followers. The death-blow had been given to his hopes and it only remained to save his life. He stayed to hear Mass at dawn at Montaigut in the valley of the Creuse, then rested and had some wine a little later at the Château of La Fayette, whose lord accompanied him some distance on the way, without approving of his plans. That night the Constable reached the castle of Herment, but was so exhausted on the way, that twice he had to rest under the trees in a fainting condition. For some reason, he had suspicions of some of his followers, and when the morning came and everyone was ready to start, his servant Peloux informed the company that the Constable had already started. When one of the men asked in consternation what they were to do, the reply was : " Ma foi, se sauve qui pourra ! "

But Bourbon was still in his chamber with five faithful followers, whom he had chosen to share his desperate fortunes. Jean de l'Hospital, his surgeon, Goudinières, his two valets de chambre Guinot and

Bartholomé, and most trusted of all, M. de Pompérant. This gentleman of Auvergne had been unfortunate enough to kill a favourite of François I. in a duel, and his life had been saved by the gallant protection of the Constable, whose faithful and devoted friend he was ever after. When all the suite had dispersed, the fugitives set forth, guided for some miles by their brave host Henri Arnauld (an ancestor of the great Jansenist). The little party was on horseback, the two valets carrying with some difficulty on their strong animals, two bags of gold and a small casket containing jewels. The great Lord of Bourbon wore a short black woollen robe, a doublet of violet satin, and a black hat surmounted by a red cap. All his followers had received orders not to reveal his rank by any outward marks of respect.

They appear to have passed on safely without adventure through La Tour and as far as St Donnat near the Mont Doré, where they dined, Pompérant sitting at the head of the table as if he were the master. That night they reached Coudat-en-Ferrières, where Henri Arnauld would have left them, but he was persuaded to remain. Starting again at dawn, they continued their journey southward, dined at Ferrières on the river Alagnon, and slept that night at the little village of Ruines. This was up in the hill-country of Auvergne, near the ancient city of Saint-Flour. The fugitives had a guide with them, a cobbler from Hernent, but next day in those wild mountain regions, both he and the Sieur Arnauld could not find the path and had to own that they had lost their way. It

was indeed a perilous journey in which they had more than one narrow escape. A few miles from Saint-Flour they met a company of seven or eight thousand Gascon foot-soldiers who were marching from Lyons to Bayonne to join Lautrec. Bourbon had the presence of mind to make no attempt to avoid the soldiers, but boldly rode by them and was not recognised.

He was quite worn out by this time and fortunately was within reach of a small manor belonging to his faithful Pompérant, called La Garde, and here he remained during four days, from Friday September 9 to Tuesday 13, sitting at meals each day below Pompérant who took his place as host at the head of the table. At this point it almost seems as if Bourbon had doubts about Henri Arnauld, for he sent him in charge of his valet Guinot to his mountain fortress of Carlat ; but Arnauld, who was becoming uneasy, made his way home to his Castle of Herment. It is from the depositions he made at his trial, that very much of our information about the details of this most perilous and exciting journey of the Constable have been obtained. From this time until October 3, we entirely lose sight of the Duc de Bourbon. François I. had published his rebellion throughout the land with a flourish of trumpets, promising 10,000 golden crowns to any one who would deliver him up. His escape was marvellous ; we can only believe that he had many loyal and faithful friends amongst his subjects. He could not venture to approach Carlat as watch would be kept for him there, and besides he

could never hope to stand a siege there, as the fortifications were no stronger than those of Chantelle. His only chance was to escape across the frontier and he probably attempted to make his way over the mountains to join the Emperor's army in Roussillon. But strict guard was kept on the frontier by the Maréchal de Foix, and this was no doubt the reason he turned back towards Lyons, where his perils increased at every step, as the King's troops were everywhere on the alert.

The historian Du Bellay does not seem to have seen Arnauld's depositions and he only takes up the story at this point, when the Constable had none but Pompérant and his faithful valet Bartholomé with him. He says that they reached the little village of Vauquelles near Lyons, where the landlady of the inn recognised Pompérant, but seems to have been ignorant of his connection with Bourbon, who was treated as a servant. They stole away at dawn and arrived at Dance, close to Vienne, with the river Rhône before them, and Pompérant went on to the bridge of Vienne where he met a butcher to whom he explained that he was one of the archers of the King's guard, and he asked if his companions had not come to guard the river against M. de Bourbon. The man replied that they had not come yet, but there were many horsemen on the Dauphiny side. However the fugitives did not cross the bridge, fearing to be recognised, but they went to the ferry about a mile farther on. Here ten or twelve foot-soldiers embarked with them, and about the middle of the river they accosted Pompérant by

his name, to his no small dismay, but by a strange chance they took no notice of Bourbon. When they landed on the opposite bank, the friends followed the high road to Grenoble as long as they were in sight of the soldiers, and then turned straight across the wooded hills until they reached Nanty, where they rested at the house of an old widow lady, who, during supper, recognised Pompérant, and asked him if he were amongst those who had played the fool with M. de Bourbon. He replied, no, but that he would give all his fortune to be in the Duke's company. News arrived before the end of the meal that the Provost, with a strong company, was about a league off in pursuit of M. de Bourbon. This was indeed alarming, but they had the presence of mind to make no sign, and quietly set off on horseback after leaving the table, riding on for nearly twelve miles before they thought it safe to rest their horses in a wild part of the mountains.

They set forth again on Tuesday morning at dawn to make their way towards Chambéry, meeting many men-at-arms on their way, and in constant danger until late on Wednesday night when they arrived at Chambéry, meaning to post on to Susa, but by good fortune they heard that St Pol was on the point of going that way to join the Admiral Bonnivet in Italy. So Bourbon changed his route, and passing over the Mont du Chat near Aix-les-Bains, crossed the Rhône again about eight leagues above Lyons, and at length reached Ste Claude, in Burgundy. Here the Constable's anxieties for his personal safety were

practically at an end. The next day he met at the great abbey, the Cardinal de la Beaume, sovereign Bishop of Geneva and partisan of the Emperor, who supplied Bourbon with a strong escort of cavalry, and he was soon afterwards joined by most of the company he had left at Herment; Lurcy, Lallière, Peloux, Espinat and other friends. The Bishop himself courteously accompanied the exile to Besançon. We learn these facts from a letter of Louis de Praet to the Emperor, dated November 9, 1523.

As soon as François I. heard of his safety, he actually had the duplicity to write to the Constable offering to restore to him all his dominions, and to repay to him all the amount due to him. We are not surprised that Bourbon refused to trust the man who had driven him to his desperate course. "It is too late"; was his reply. When the messenger asked him to give back the Constable's sword, and the Collar of the Order of St Michael he said: "Tell the King that he took from me the sword of Constable when he took from me the command of the van-guard and gave it to M. d'Alençon. As for the Collar of his Order, you will find it at Chantelle under the pillow of my bed."

The Duc de Bourbon had crossed the Rubicon and there was no turning back. He had taken a final farewell of his native land, of all his splendid possessions and his great position in France. He turned his face towards the Emperor who was now his only hope.

It was at the time of his rebellion that Charles de Bourbon took the motto of "Victoire ou Mort!" as a symbol of the bold defiance with which he challenged

his fate. The Bourbon family had been content in the past days of peace and prosperity with the simple word, " Espérance."

The earliest motto which the present Duc de Bourbon had chosen was " Penetrabit," with the device of a flying stag, but later days of anxiety had driven him to engrave on the blade of his sword ; " Omnis spes in ferro " ; words which well expressed his proud and self-reliant attitude towards a world in arms against him.

CHAPTER IX

FINAL STEP OF THE DUC DE BOURBON—HIS POSITION—HE GOES TO MANTUA—JOINS THE VICEROY OF NAPLES AT BINASCO —CLEMENT VII. ELECTED POPE—INVASION OF FRANCE BY HENRY VIII. AND CHARLES V.—ALARM OF FRANÇOIS I. —HIS CRUEL PURSUIT OF BOURBON'S ADHERENTS ; SAINT-VALLIER AND OTHERS.

CHARLES DE BOURBON had taken the final step and broken irrevocably with his stately past. Until that last moment of his flight from Chantelle, he had been in the position of a sovereign making secret alliances with other princely rulers, for carrying war into a hostile land. He had his plans of invasion all ready, he was in touch with his allies, he was raising an army in his own dominions, he had bands of sturdy lands-knechte awaiting his orders under the Captain Saint-Saphorin and others.

But the vigilance of his foes and the treachery of pretended adherents had disturbed all his calculations, and his scheme of open and declared warfare. He found himself at last caught in a net from which, to save his very life, he must escape by means of guile and devious ways, which were bitter beyond expression to his proud spirit.

It is at this point of his career that we should pause before we pass judgment upon Charles de Bourbon, and

seriously consider Brantôme's question: "What could Monsieur de Bourbon have done if he had not acted as he did?" and the answer: "He would have been taken prisoner, tried, and had his head cut off, like the Constable de Saint-Pôl, and have been dishonoured for ever, he and his race."

We can face the subject with clearer and more judicial insight now, at the turning of the ways, rather than at the end of his tragic story, when the main question is dim and blurred by the long train of inevitable consequences, and when we feel that, like Orestes, he is driven onward by furies, without choice or free-will.

Was Bourbon justified in his rebellion? We know that a revolution which fails is called "high treason," but if it succeeds, there is another name for it. And we must remember that success appeared possible at this moment, and the throne of France was scarcely beyond the reach of this splendid young Prince of the blood royal, who was so close in succession. François I. was very unpopular for his reckless extravagance, and the extortionate taxes needed to pay for his wars and his pleasures; and his mother was hated for her greed and avarice. The young Duc de Bourbon was a striking and attractive figure in himself, and was also the adopted son of the great Anne of France, whose regency of the kingdom was now looked back upon as almost a Golden Age by the French people. Charles was already their idol; they were dazzled by his personal splendour and prestige, his marvellous success in war; and at this moment were full of

sympathy with his cause. Even the Parliament had stood out for him in the great lawsuit with amazing pertinacity, in spite of the overwhelming influence of the King and the Queen-mother.

With the powerful outside support of the Emperor and Henry VIII., it might well have seemed as though the first brilliant success at arms would cause the nobles of the realm to join the champion of their order, as once before at the Palace of the Louvre, they had followed him from the presence of François I. We have already seen that this was the opinion of astute lookers-on, like the Emperor Charles and Cardinal Wolsey. On what a hair's breadth may hang the fate of dynasties! The change from Valois to Bourbon might have been forestalled by more than half a century and as Charles IX., the verdict of history would, perhaps, have justified Charles de Bourbon in his revolt.

Is this a case where: "tout comprendre, c'est tout pardonner?"

At the most critical point of his story, Fate was against Charles de Bourbon. The premature discovery of his plans, and the hasty flight thus rendered necessary, placed the Duke at once under a serious disadvantage. Instead of joining his allies on the frontier of Picardy with a strong force, and such a technical knowledge of the position as would probably have placed him in command, untoward circumstances had compelled Bourbon to make his escape towards the south, so that when he reached Germany it was as a homeless fugitive, stripped of his great

possessions, his fabulous wealth, his high position, and with nothing to offer, for the service of the Emperor, but his name and his sword.

After a weary journey of six weeks, he at length arrived at Trent, where he only remained to rest for two or three days, before he travelled on to Mantua, the home of his mother, Chiara Gonzaga. Here the exile was amongst his kindred, and the young Marchese Federico, his first cousin, welcomed him with much kindness. Federico Gonzaga had held the proud position of Captain-General of the Church under both Pope Leo X. and Adrian VI., the learned scholar and homely well-meaning old man, who had recently died on September 14. The mother of the gay young Marchese, the famous Isabella d'Este, had always had a warm corner in her heart for her nephew Charles, the son of her sister-in-law and great friend Chiara. She wrote to his aunt, Elisabetta, Duchess of Urbino, " that she could not express how charming and handsome he was, and how nobly and cheerfully he bore his misfortunes, this Monsignore de Bourbon."

For his aunt Isabella, the French prince was still invested with the glamour of his magnificent presence when, in his fortunate youth, he rode amid the train of Louis XII., into conquered Milan, in stately procession. Then she had written of him as " our nephew, a tall youth of handsome and majestic appearance, who closely resembles his mother (Chiara, duchess of Montpensier), in complexion, eyes and features."

Kind as she could be, this great lady always had a very keen eye to her own advantage, and we can

imagine the eagerness with which she would enquire about the future fate of the priceless treasures of the palace of Chantelles and elsewhere . . . and as to whether any fortunate chance might bring some of them within her reach. . . . With Isabella, affection always gave way to interest, but fortunately on this occasion, she could show kindness to her nephew and yet remain on the safe side. The King of France was no concern of hers, now that her son Federico was in the definite service of the Pope and the Emperor.

So at least she had every reason to hope, for after a conclave of fifty days, when the unfortunate Cardinals had been quite worn out, and almost reduced to starvation in order to compel their decision, they had just elected, on November 19, the Cardinal dei Medici, with the title of Clement VII. The Gonzagas were exultant to see an old friend once more in the Chair of St Peter, and had at once sent Baldassare Castiglione to congratulate him, and to ensure the continuance of the young Marchese of Mantua as Captain-General of the Church. It would be too long to tell the whole story of the intrigues which brought about this result, of such extreme importance to the Emperor and Henry VIII., that both of them were prepared to use the utmost pressure, bribery, and even compulsion, if necessary, to obtain the election of their candidate. The French party was not strong enough to do more than oppose anyone suggested by Charles V. Cardinal Wolsey had great hopes this time after his last disappointment but, in fact, the fear of "another barbarian foreigner" like the good Pope Adrian, who

thought to reform his luxurious Cardinals like so many schoolboys, had quite ruined the chances of Henry VIIIth's nominee. Giulio dei Medici played his part with supreme patience and diplomacy, and, combined with the weighty support of Charles V., these won the day, to the exceeding joy of all Rome, where a splendid prince was more desired than a saint.

Charles de Bourbon fully shared in the general satisfaction when he left Mantua, after a short visit, with a suitable escort generously provided by his cousin the Marchese Federico. He made his way first to Cremona, and then to Piacenza, where Charles de Lannoy, Viceroy of Naples, came to meet him. From thence the Duc de Bourbon travelled on to Genoa, a sad and disappointed man, for this enforced inaction was a terrible trial to him when he knew that his presence in the Imperial army would have ensured victory. He thought of embarking for Spain, but during five weeks he was delayed at Genoa by contrary winds, and he was also awaiting the return of Lurcy whom he had sent at once to the Emperor after his flight from Chantelles. He was on the point of embarking, when at length his faithful Lurcy arrived in company with de Reux, the envoy of Charles V., who had sent Bourbon the choice of joining him in Spain, or of remaining in Italy with the Imperial army.

He had no hesitation in deciding that his place was in the thick of war, and he hastened to join the Viceroy of Naples at Binasco, a strong little Castle between Milan and the Certosa of Pavia. Here he soon received news of the late events in France from the Bishop of

Autun, who told him that all his estates were already in the hands of François I., who had first seized the Castle of Chantelle, the favourite home of the Constable, and which contained "the most exquisite furniture and works of art ever possessed by any Christian Prince."

To understand the full bitterness of the Bishop's story for the unfortunate exile, we must go back to the time of Bourbon's flight from home and his country.

At that moment the situation of the King of France was most critical; his kingdom was threatened on every side. Henry VIII. had sent an army of 15,000 foot-soldiers and about 1000 horsemen under the command of the Duke of Suffolk, which landed at Calais about the end of August, while early in September, the Count de Buren had joined the English with 3000 or 4000 landsknechte, 3000 of the Netherlands cavalry, and 2000 chariots to transport the munitions and the baggage of the troops. At the same time, 10,000 Germans, raised by the Counts of Furstenberg and de Werdenberg, had appeared near Bresse, ready to enter France by the Eastern frontier. At the south, the Spaniards, who were strengthened by the landsknechte from Zealand, were crossing the Pyrenees with the intention of taking Bayonne and advancing into Guienne. Prospero Colonna, who commanded the Imperial army in Italy, had received from the Emperor orders to invade Provence when he had driven back the French army which Bonnivet had brought into Lombardy.

It seemed as if François I. were quite unprepared to face so resolute and well-combined an invasion. The greater part of his companies were in Italy, and in Scotland where he sought to retaliate on Henry VIII., and he had neglected the proper defence of his own country. A few places on the frontier, such as Thérouanne, Boulogne, Doulens, etc., were well fortified, but most of his cities had neither ramparts nor fortifications to protect them, nor garrisons to defend them. It was a grave question if even Paris herself could make a stand if the enemy should march straight thither. We find from many private letters of men in authority, that Picardy was almost destitute of soldiers and could make scarcely any defence against the invaders. La Trémouille had been sent at once to meet the English and Flemish, but his army was so small and inefficient that he could do but little. The invaders had called upon Doulens to surrender, but the commander refused, and as the town was strong enough to require a regular siege, the enemy passed on to Bray-sur-Somme, which they took and burnt, as an example, to induce other cities to open their gates.

In vain the French army under La Trémouille sought to bar the crossing of the river to their foes, who passed on victorious to Roye and Montdidier, which opened their gates without a parley. It was in this neighbourhood that the Duc de Bourbon was expected to join the enemy with his landsknechte and march upon Paris. Runners were sent on, who were seen at Compiègne, Clermont-en-Beauvoisis and Senlis, and these towns, in terror, sent horsemen to Paris to

announce that they could not defend themselves and would open their gates at once.

The capital could not help them, and a panic arose ; the citizens were enrolled for defence, and messengers were sent in haste to the King to tell him that his faithful city was in peril and to ask for immediate help. The enemy was expected to appear at the gates at any moment, and in order to hear the noise of their approach, it was forbidden for the church bells to ring on the solemn day of All Saints.

François I. was at Lyons when the alarming news reached him, and he at once sent the Duc de Vendôme and a new Governor, Chabot de Brion, to see to the protection of Paris. The fortifications were increased, trenches were made, ramparts were heightened ; a tax of 16,000 livres was raised to pay for 2000 foot-soldiers ; the archers of the " vicomté of Paris were called out, and the provost and aldermen were ordered to put iron chains across the usual places." But the King's greatest fear was concerning the conspiracy of Bourbon, which he believed to be much more far-reaching than it really was.

François had already seized all the Duke's adherents on whom he could lay his hands, and he had sent to the Castle prison of Loches, Saint Vallier, Aymard de Prie, the Bishops of Autun and du Puy, the Chancellor of the Bourbonnais and others, including d'Escars who, to the last moment, had been serving in Picardy. He had selected for their trial, de Selves, the President of the Parliament of Paris ; the President of the inquests of Loynes ; Salat the Master of requests ; and the

Councillor Papillon. These learned men set about their task in a serious and impartial manner, which excited the anger of the King, who urged them on with vindictive energy to use the most violent measures for discovering the whole truth. He told them that this was no time for moderation when "Messire Charles de Bourbon was invading Burgundy with a great German army," [1] and there were many traitors in the kingdom ready to join his enemies. . . . "You must see after this business with the greatest diligence," he added, "and extract the truth from those who are in your power, by torture or otherwise. . . . The affair is privileged, and it is not needful to observe the usual legal methods. . . ."

When the commissioners, who were most unwilling to use cruel force, suggested that the case should be tried by the Parliament, the King abused them roundly for their weakness and cowardice when the kingdom was in peril, and bitterly reproached them for having discovered nothing which he did not already know. Wild with terror, François I. was quite merciless, and his easy good-temper seemed changed into brutality. An unfortunate man-at-arms was drawn and quartered at Lyons for having been in the service of Bourbon and having carried a secret letter for him. The Chancellor du Prat tells the story with delight, remarking "that it would serve as a warning to others."

But the most typical case is that of the Seigneur de Saint-Vallier, Count of Valentinois, with half a dozen other titles and dignities. He was a distinguished

[1] This was not true.

general, had been Governor of Dauphiné under Louis XII., and had taken an army at his own expense (100,000 crowns, which had never been repaid) to Italy in the service of François I., and fought bravely at the siege of Milan and the battle of la Bicocca. As we have seen, he was with Charles de Bourbon at Montbrison when the secret treaty was signed with the Emperor, and was certainly implicated in the conspiracy, but it is a surprise to find that this gallant soldier completely broke down under the hardships of his captivity in the grim prison of Loches. He was shut up in a special dungeon, still haunted by the tragic memory of Cardinal La Balue, and was watched by spies night and day. He wrote pitiful letters to his son-in-law, Louis de Brezé, and his daughter, the beautiful Diane de Poitiers, imploring them to save him at any price. Overcome with fear of the threatened torture and shameful death, he fell ill with prostration and weakness. " Il n'est pas de jour où il ne pleure tout son saoul," says Guiffrey. He was willing to confess everything, and it is from his full depositions that we have the curious details, already given, of the various meetings with the envoys of the Emperor and Henry VIII. True, he added that he had done his best to persuade the Constable to return to his allegiance, but we have no means of knowing if this was founded on fact.

But the King was not satisfied, and insisted that Saint-Vallier had more to reveal, urging that the strongest measures were necessary, and absolutely without pity for the brave general who had served him

so well in bygone days. He gave orders that he should be removed to the Conciergerie in Paris, degraded and tortured before execution, and he sent the Duke of Luxembourg to deprive him formally of the Collar of the Order of St Michael. The unfortunate prisoner heard the King's sentence from his bed of sickness, and protested against this last indignity. "The King well knew where he had lost the collar, in his service. . . ." but in spite of his resistance another collar was placed on his neck, only to be torn off violently. The instruments of torture were brought into the chamber, and he was pressed to make further confession. But in this last extremity the old man's courage returned; he declared that he knew nothing more, that he had told all, and that torture could extract from him no false testimony. He asked for his confessor, and for permission to make his will, and after having spent an hour with the priest, he gave him leave to reveal all that he had said. The prisoner was in so dangerous a condition by this time that torture was spared him, as he would not have survived it to endure the barbarous ceremony which followed, and is thus described:—

"At three o'clock, the procession set forth; Saint-Vallier bareheaded, his hands bound behind his back, a robe lined with fox skin over his shoulders, hoisted on the back of a horse, while an archer of the town sat behind to support him on account of his great weakness. The executioner led the horse by the bridle; on one side was an officer of justice, and on the other, the curé Merlin rode on his mule. Before

reaching the Place de la Grève, the victim had to cross a compact multitude, which was only driven back with the greatest difficulty by the sergeants of the Chatelet, and the guard on foot and on horseback. On reaching the scaffold, Saint-Vallier was given into the hands of the two executioners, Macé and Rotillon. They seized the gentleman, bore him on to the platform, stripped him to his doublet; after which they forced him to kneel down and ask the pardon of God and of justice."

There was a pause after this, and we can only suppose that it was a refinement of cruelty, meant to increase the dramatic effect. The poor man implored the headsman to make haste. . . . "An hour passed in this way, when at last a horseman arrived at full speed, waving in the air a letter which he held in his hand, and crying out as far off as he could be heard: "Hola! hola! Stop! stop! Here is the King's pardon."

This had no doubt been arranged beforehand, as most historians agree that Saint-Vallier's life was spared by the intercession of his daughter, Diane de Poitiers, with the King, a delicate point, which after events make extremely probable. In any case, her father's sentence was commuted into one of perpetual imprisonment. We may imagine his intense relief after that fearful ordeal, and "he returned thanks to God, kissing the scaffold twice and making the sign of the cross several times." Yet this was his dreary sentence: "That he should be perpetually shut up within four stone walls, enclosed above and below,

in which there would only be a little window through which his food and drink could be passed."

But in point of fact, Saint-Vallier did not long endure this living death, for he was soon removed to Loches where he was placed in an ordinary prison where he could receive his friends. Later he was set free (on the King's return from Madrid), married a third wife, and lived for fifteen years in his home in Dauphiné.

CHAPTER X

WHY THE INVASION OF FRANCE FAILED—THE WAR IN ITALY CARRIED ON BY BONNIVET—DEATH OF POPE ADRIAN VI. FATAL DELAYS AND MISTAKES OF BONNIVET—GALLANT DEEDS OF BAYARD—HIS PERILOUS TASK AND DEATH—BAYARD'S LEGENDARY REPROACH OF BOURBON INVESTIGATED—LETTER OF ADRIAN DE CROY.

IN the autumn of 1523, France was attacked on every side and to all appearance was in deadly peril, but the following months saw a great change in her position. This was not so much by any great feat of arms or triumph of diplomacy, but by the mistakes and want of union amongst her foes. The combined English and Flemish army had never continued that march upon Paris which could scarcely have failed to be successful. After waiting some time, the landsknechte of the Duc de Bourbon, whose flight southward had prevented his leading them, had crossed the Meuse above Neufchatel, and turned towards the western part of Champagne where they met with obstacles they could not surmount. They met the Duke of Guise with his men-at-arms, who harassed them to such a degree that they could obtain no forage or provisions and were driven to choose between death or retreat. They decided on the latter, and retraced their steps, crossing the Meuse again, where the Duke of Guise was before

them, and they did not reach Lorraine without great loss of life. Deprived of their help, the army of Henry VIII. could not advance alone.

Marguerite of Austria, Governor of the Netherlands for her nephew Charles V., declared that all her resources were exhausted, and that she could no longer subsidize the troops under the command of the Count de Buren. She offered to leave them to the English if they would pay them, but this did not suit Henry VIII. who had already been put to great expense with very little gain. He had been obliged to keep several armies, that which had invaded France, that which, after having defended the frontiers of England against the attacks of the Duke of Albany, had crossed the border and ravaged Scotland, and the third, which had to guard the Channel. He complained bitterly of all his promised allies, and was compelled to retreat instead of carrying on a winter campaign as he had purposed. The English army suffered severely from the bad weather and from illness, gave up Montdidier, Roye and Bray, after having pillaged them, and was at length led back to Calais by the Duke of Suffolk towards the end of November.

The Southern invasion of Charles V. was not more successful. He was to have crossed the Pyrenees with a large army at the same time as the English landed in the North, but he had promised more than he could accomplish. With much solid strength of character, he was rather over-burdened with caution, which produced a certain slowness both of disposition and of conduct, so that in all his actions he was con-

MARGUERITE OF AUSTRIA
Bernard Van Orley
By kind permission of Dr. I. Carvallo

stantly behind-hand. Besides this, he was always hampered, like his father Maximilian, by want of money, and his forces were usually too small to carry out his great designs. Each part of his immense empire was jealous of the other, and was slow to raise, for their sovereign, the large sums he required lest they should be spent elsewhere. Spain was wealthy, but took no interest in his constant wars in Italy, France, and the Netherlands; thus the Cortes only voted him subsidies most reluctantly and sparingly. He taxed the Orders of Knighthood, and the clergy, and took toll of the gold from the Indies; yet all this was not enough. He found reason to complain of his Spanish soldiers, who were no longer the trained veterans of the Moorish wars. He had led them across the Pyrenees in September in the direction of Bayonne which he hoped to take by surprise. But the French captain, Lautrec, showed more skill and resolution here than he had done in Italy; he threw himself into the threatened city and defended it with much vigilance and intrepidity, never leaving the walls himself, for days together. He thus drove back the enemy which ought to have been supported, from the side of the sea, by a fleet which could not approach on account of contrary winds. The Spaniards, reduced in number, were forced to retreat across the Pyrenees, having only been able to pillage Sauveterre and St Jean-de-Luz.

This was a humiliating result of the Emperor's vast projects, and he felt himself compelled to make some sort of excuse through his ambassadors to his ally

Henry VIII. Yet Charles was not easily discouraged, and he still had firm faith in his ultimate success. He established his camp at Pampeluna where he had collected all his artillery, he caused a fresh levy of troops to be collected in Aragon, and made all preparations for a winter campaign. At the same time, he sent Adrian de Croy (Beaurain) to meet the Duc de Bourbon in Italy, and to invest him as Lieutenant-General with full powers as his representative. This was the wisest step he could have taken, for there was no general to compare with Bourbon, either in the French army which was fighting to retake Milan, or the Imperial army which was defending the duchy.

Guillaume Gouffier, Seigneur de Bonnivet, Grand-Admiral of France, was in command of the splendid army of François I., with which he had himself hoped to conquer Lombardy, an enterprise which seemed nearer to his heart than even the protection of France. Unable to go farther than Lyons until he had stamped out the conspiracy of Bourbon, he had entrusted the fate of the expedition to this favourite of his, who was by no means equal to his position. Bonnivet's personal courage could not make up for his want of military skill; he was before all things a courtier, and this was not enough, although he had excellent captains under him, whose advice he constantly disregarded through jealousy. This was especially the case with Bayard, the "chevalier sans peur et sans reproche," a consummate master of strategy and all the arts of war, whose heroism was wasted, and before long, whose life was sacrificed by the inefficiency and

mean jealousy of his commander. Had Charles de Bourbon led that splendid army of 1800 men-at-arms and 25,000 foot-soldiers, many of them the best fighting soldiers in Europe, the history of Europe might have been very different !

The campaign in Italy had already continued for several months, for Bonnivet had crossed the Ticino on the very day of Pope Adrian, the peacemaker's death, September 14, 1523. The Imperial army was at that time under the command of Prospero Colonna, the veteran leader who was accustomed to lead his troops to victory. But these were reduced in number ; he was old and enfeebled by illness, and he was no longer supported by that brave and efficient leader, Ferdinand d'Avalos, Marchese di Pescara, whose Spanish pride made him unwilling to take the second place under the imperious Italian. Two other brave captains, Alarçon and Antonio de Leyva, distinguished themselves, and above all the famous Giovanni (delle bande nere) dei Medici, who was almost the equal of Pescara in skill, and far excelled him in audacity.

Colonna had hoped to protect the left bank of the Ticino against the French, but there had been no rain for ten weeks, and the stream, usually so wide and deep, had scarcely any water, so that it could be forded in many places. When the French reached Vigevano, the Imperial general saw that he could no longer dispute their advance, and he retreated in haste with his army to Milan, which was in a state of well-founded alarm, for it was scarcely in a position to be defended.

It was exposed in many places, the earthworks had never been finished, and Colonna, expecting the immediate arrival of a strong attacking army, was almost disposed to retire from the city with the young Duke, Francesco Sforza. But at that critical moment news came that Bonnivet was still on the banks of the Ticino. Instead of pushing forward and pressing his advantage, the too prudent commander lingered for several days to place garrisons here and there, and to build a bridge at Vigevano, and then slowly continued his march after this fatal delay. Meantime, with renewed hope, Colonna and his soldiers vied with the inhabitants in strengthening the defences of Milan. They all worked, night and day, at building up the ramparts, closing the breaches, and replacing the bastions, so that when Bonnivet at length arrived with his army, all was ready to receive them.

He placed his camp to the south-west, below the gate to Rome, put his cannons in position and began to bombard the walls. But as this assault had no result, and he had lost the chance of taking the city by surprise, he resolved to try what a blockade would do. He moved the camp to the south between Pavia and Lodi, where he could intercept all communication from that quarter and from the east, as his plan was to reduce Milan by famine. From the west, he held the course of the Ticino, by Abbiate-Grasso and Vigevano; while to the north, in the stronghold of Monza, he left enough troops to prevent provisions arriving from upper Lombardy. He made the blockade more complete by turning aside the stream which flowed into

the city, and by destroying all the water-mills in the vicinity.

Colonna still had four strong places in the duchy; Milan, where he was himself in possession; Pavia, in charge of Antonio de Leyva; Lodi on the Adda; and somewhat below the junction of the Adda and the Po, Cremona, where he had sent the garrison of Alessandria. But Bayard was sent with 400 men-at-arms, 8000 foot-soldiers and ten pieces of artillery to take Lodi, which made no resistance, as Federico Marchese of Mantua, general of the papal army, had too small a garrison to defend it, and marched out to join the Venetians. Having taken possession of Lodi, Bayard advanced to Cremona, where the French still held the citadel, and bombarded the walls with such effect that he soon made a breach large enough to give hopes of taking the place by assault, but Colonna had sent so strong a reinforcement that the gallant knight was driven back, and received an urgent summons to defend Monza which was attacked.

Meanwhile the people of Milan were enduring the greatest hardships, having been reduced for one terrible week to eat oats and barley, which they had made hand-mills to grind; but their courage never failed. As for the soldiers, who received no pay, they amused themselves with frequent sorties, and the Spanish garrison of Pavia made incursions in the French camp and so much alarmed Bonnivet, lest the bridges on the Ticino should be destroyed, that he sent for Bayard and his companions to leave Monza and come to their protection. Prospero Colonna immedi-

ately seized this fortress, which opened up a free passage of the sorely needed provisions for Milan. Thus Bonnivet found himself as incapable of reducing the city by famine as by assault, and the heavens seemed to fight against him, as the winter was so terribly severe that the whole country was covered with snow. His army suffered so much that he decided to retreat as far as the Ticino, where he could command both banks, but in reality the purpose of the campaign had failed.

Before the end of the year, the Imperial army had lost the fine old General Prospero Colonna, but he knew that Bourbon was to take his place and that his success would continue. Indeed, from this moment, the war changed its character; instead of being on the defensive, the Imperial army now took the offensive and began to drive out the French from that part of Lombardy still left to them. The Duc de Bourbon was soon joined by the Viceroy Lannoy, and Pescara, who were both willing to recognise his authority. Such fair-weather friends as the Venetians were prompt in joining the Emperor's side in force, now that it seemed the strongest, and their Captain-General, the Duke of Urbino—with 6000 foot-soldiers, 700 men-at-arms, and 500 light cavalry—joined in the attack on Bonnivet.

All this time François I. had been receiving hopeful letters from his favourite, and was daily expecting to hear that Milan was once more in his possession. But instead of this welcome news, there came a demand from Bonnivet for reinforcements, while at the same

time arrived the tidings that Charles V. had crossed the Pyrenees in the heart of winter, and had taken Fonterabia. The King was also most indignant with the Parliament for having passed light sentences on some of Bourbon's accomplices; but nothing made much impression on his vain frivolous nature, and he had tried to forget his troubles in pleasures of every kind, "hunting all day and feasting all night" at Blois. When he learnt the true position of Bonnivet on his arrival in Paris, he was roused at length, and ordered 8000 Swiss landsknechte from the Grisons; they were to be met by the Duc de Longueville with 400 men-at-arms at Ivrea, and to be escorted to Bonnivet's camp. The King also joined in a solemn procession to pray for the success of his army in Italy.

By this time it was almost past help. Bourbon had managed the pursuit with his usual skill and courage. He threatened Bonnivet first on the right, where he was weakest, and then made a sudden attack on Abbiate-Grasso which was unprotected and yielded at once. Following the retiring army, he was closing it in, and the French general, fearing to have his retreat cut off, drew back as far as Novara. Here he waited for the expected reinforcements, but the first body of Swiss had arrived at Chiavenna, and finding no cavalry to escort them and no money to pay them, were only too well satisfied with an excuse for turning back, when Giovanni dei Medici attacked them and put them to flight. The French army continued to retreat and reached the left bank of the Sesia, where this river flows out of the mountains and enters the

plain of Piedmont. A little farther, on the right bank, is Gattinara, where the 8000 Swiss sent by the King had arrived, without having been met as they expected at Ivrea. They had continued their march, in the worst of tempers, not with any idea of helping the French, but hoping to meet their fellow-countrymen and induce them all to go back to their cantons together.

Thus when Bonnivet first knew of their coming, they were on the other side of the river Sesia, which they refused to cross. He was therefore obliged to join them with his army, which he did by night, in much disorder and with considerable loss, for the stream was swollen by floods, and the troops of Bourbon and Pescara were in hot pursuit. It was in the constant skirmishing which followed that Bonnivet was wounded in the arm by a shot from an arquebuse, and in this hour of despair, relinquished the heavy burden of commanding an army in flight to the Comte de St-Pôl and the Chevalier Bayard. The splendid skill and courage of the " Bon chevalier, sans peur et sans reproche " was called in too late, when already all was lost. With his usual heroism, he took the post of danger, defending the rear-guard with his own company of men-at-arms and some Swiss bands led by Jean de Diesbach. Whenever the boldest of the pursuers came too near, Bayard turned and charged them with such vehemence that they were compelled to retreat. A brave companion of his, the Seigneur de Vandenesse, was killed in one of these gallant feats of arms, and Bayard himself was mortally wounded

by the stone shot from an arquebuse, which crushed his spine.

The soldiers of his company would have carried him on with them at any cost, but he would not consent, saying he had never turned his back upon the enemy. By his request, he was taken from his horse and placed at the foot of a tree ; kissing the cross on his sword, he said aloud : " Miserere mei, Deus, secundum magnam misericordiam tuam." We have a most touching and beautiful account by the " Loyal Serviteur," of the last moments of this famous hero of many a siege and battle : Brescia, Agnadello, Ravenna, Marignano ; the most perfect gentle knight of history or romance.

But in this life of Charles de Bourbon, we are chiefly concerned in inquiring into the truth of a reputed incident which has done more to discredit the exiled Duke than anything else. I allude to the story told by Martin du Bellay, which has been repeated in almost every history of France ever since, and which is possibly all that many people remember about Charles de Bourbon. This is the legend : " The Duc de Bourbon came to see Bayard and said that he deeply pitied him, seeing him in that state, who had been so noble a knight." Captain Bayard made reply : " Monsieur, do not pity me, for I die as an honest man ; but I pity you, seeing you serve against your prince, and your country and your oath."

Now there is no foundation whatever for these words except the statement of du Bellay, who was the Court historian of François I., and who is described as

having written his " Memoirs " for the sole purpose of flattering his King. The faithful " Loyal Serviteur," —who enters with such minute detail into every incident of his beloved master's career, and was his constant companion,—makes no allusion to this meeting with Bourbon. Symphorien Champier, who married a cousin of Bayard and wrote his life, gives quite a different account. This is what he says : " When the Seigneur de Bourbon, who was then chief of his enemies, heard that Bayard was wounded unto death, he came to him and said : ' Bayard, my friend, I am much grieved at your misfortune ; you must be patient, do not trouble ; I will send you the best surgeons of the land, and by the grace of God, you will soon be well.'

" When Bayard heard these words and recognised him, he said : ' Monseigneur, it is no time for me to seek physicians for the body, but those for the soul. I know that I am wounded unto death, and there is no remedy, but I praise God Who gives me grace to know Him at the end of my life. I accept death willingly, and have no regret in dying, save that I can no longer serve my King, and that I must leave his affairs at which I grieve. I pray God that after my death he may have such a servitor as I would desire to have been.' Then the said lord (of Bourbon) went away sorrowful, with tears in his eyes, and said to those who were with him that it was a pitiful thing to see the Good Knight die thus. . . ."

Can we believe that Bayard who had all his life been distinguished for his perfect courtesy and charity

to all men should, in his dying hour, have turned away from the holy and heavenly thoughts which filled his soul, to wound, with a stinging reproof, his old friend the Duc de Bourbon? So strong had been that former friendship that the Good Knight had fallen into disgrace at Court, and been kept in exile in Dauphiné, on account of it. Bayard had been a frequent guest of Charles de Bourbon in his stately palaces, he had knighted in his cradle the infant heir of that great race, who did not live long enough to appreciate so high an honour. With a vivid remembrance of the princely pomp and magnificence in which he had last seen the Duke, and the splendid possessions of which he had been deprived, we can imagine that the Good Knight felt the warmest sympathy with the misfortunes of the exile.

In any case, du Bellay was not present at Bayard's death, and as his account is totally unsupported by any evidence, we may take it as a stroke of inventive genius on his part. It was no small exploit thus to flatter and please his sovereign, by putting in the mouth of the Good Knight—the beloved hero of all France—the condemnation of Bourbon whom François hated. There is nothing so effective as a well-conceived dying speech, as experience has often proved, both before and since the day of our "Good Knight without Fear and without Reproach."

If the "Loyal Serviteur" does not mention Bourbon, he speaks of many a great lord and gallant knight from the Spanish lines, approaching to do honour to the dying hero. His fame had spread throughout

Christendom ; he was the very " Flower of Chivalry," the pattern of all gallant knights, and his loss was grievous to both friend and foe. The Marchese di Pescara was one of those who drew near full of reverence and grief.

" ' Had it pleased God to spare you, gentle Seigneur de Bayard, and had you been my prisoner, I would have shown you how highly I esteem your splendid valour. Our nation give you the highest praise . . . and since I have borne arms, I have never heard tell of any knight who came near you in all virtues ; and although I ought to be content to see you thus, as my Emperor has no more dangerous enemy, yet when I consider the great loss which all chivalry has met with to-day, may God help me if I would not have given half I possess that it should be otherwise.

" ' But as for death there is no remedy, I call upon Him who has made us all in His likeness, to take your soul into His keeping.'

" Such were the sad and pitiful regrets of Pescara and other captains. . . . When Bayard's friends gathered round him ; the Provost of Paris, Gabriel d' Alègre, Seigneur de Milhau, Jean de Disbach the Swiss captain, and others, he bid them not lament his death, and sent them away for fear they might be taken prisoners. He confessed to a priest who was brought when he had lingered on for two or three hours, and then ' the Good Knight without Fear and without Reproach ' gave up his soul to God."

Amongst the great number of letters concerning this campaign (still preserved in the Archives of

Vienna), written to Charles V. by Bourbon, Lannoy, and Adrian de Croy; one from this last gives us a vivid idea of the estimation in which Bayard was held, even by those against whom he fought.

"From the Camp of Biroux,
"*May* 5, 1524.

"Sire, . . . The Captain Bayard turned back with some French men-at-arms and four or five bands of foot-soldiers, they drove back our men and rescued the pieces of artillery, which it would have been better for him if he had lost, for as he was about to return, he received the shot from an arquebuse, of which he died the same day. . . . Sire, Although the said Sieur Bayard was in the service of your enemy, yet his death was a great misfortune, for he was a gentle knight (gentil chevalier), well beloved by all, and who had lived better than ever did any of his condition, as indeed he showed at his end which was the most beautiful which I have ever heard of. The loss is great indeed to the French, and it is very overwhelming to them. . . .

"Your Majesty's most humble and obedient subject and servant,

"Adrian de Croy,
"(Seigneur de Beaurain)."

CHAPTER XI

DUCHY OF MILAN LOST BY BONNIVET—LUXURY AND EXTRAVAGANCE OF FRANÇOIS I.—HE IS COMPARED WITH CHARLES V.—LEAGUE AGAINST FRANCE—THE DUC DE BOURBON LEADS THE IMPERIAL TROOPS ACROSS THE ALPES MARITIMES, INTO PROVENCE AND THROUGH THE ÉSTEREL TO FRÉJUS AND MARSEILLES—BOURBON LAYS SIEGE TO MARSEILLES—IT IS GALLANTLY DEFENDED BY RENZO DA CERI.

AFTER the death of Bayard, the retreat was under the command of the Comte de Saint-Pôl, and was rapidly conducted without much disturbance, as it was the policy of the Imperial Commander to drive the remnant of the fugitive army out of Italy as quickly as possible, rather than destroy it. It is quite possible that we see here the forbearance of Bourbon, who must have felt his triumph complete when he saw thus at his mercy, Bonnivet his ancient enemy to whom he believed that all his misfortunes were due. This French general certainly had immense influence with Louise, the Queen-mother, and the King was so blind to his faults and general inefficiency as a commander, that even this disastrous loss of the duchy of Milan, did not bring him any blame or reproach. For never had there been a more complete and ruinous defeat. When the Swiss had retired by way of the valley of Aosta, and the French by Susa and Briançon, all the places in the possession of François I. gave themselves

up. Alessandria and Lodi capitulated, as they could no longer expect help, and the Citadel of Cremona, which had held out for more than two years, was compelled to open its gates. The garrisons were allowed to retire with all the honours of war, and the duchy of Milan was lost for the second time.

Varillas gives such a clear account of the methods by which Bonnivet was accustomed to flatter the King into a good temper, that it is worth quoting. "The reception which the Court gave Bonnivet on his return was very different from that which Lautrec had met with the previous year; while the power which the King's mother had over her son, and the suppleness of a perfect courtier like Bonnivet never showed more than on this delicate occasion. Bonnivet, who by so many remarkable faults had just ruined an army of 50,000 men, was received with as much honour as if he had recovered Milan, and they only gave him the first place in the Council then summoned, after profuse apologies for not better recognising the importance of his services.

"He contributed much himself to his good fortune by persuading the King that his retreat was more splendid than that of the Ten Thousand Greeks under Xenophon who, having escaped from the battle where the young Cyrus was killed, crossed five hundred leagues of hostile country without loss, although the Persian army was almost always at their heels. As Bonnivet knew that he should not dare to accept the command of another army, he thought of a clever expedient which was the cause of all the misfortunes

which happened afterwards to the French beyond the Alps.

" He pointed out to François I. that it was fated for the duchy of Milan only to be recovered by the Most Christian Kings, at the head of their armies ; and as it had been conquered the first time by Louis XII., and the second time by His Majesty, it would not be recovered the third time unless the King placed himself at the head of so powerful an army that the Imperialists would not face it in the field."

Can we imagine Charles V. being caught by so coarse a bait of flattery ?

We have already seen how diverse their boyhood and early training had been, and it may help us better to grasp the position if we fully realise the profound difference in character between these two rivals when they had both attained to manhood and almost absolute power.

From a gay, wilful, spoilt boy, Francois I. had developed into a luxurious, self-indulgent man who lightly sought his pleasures in every flowery path, with no restraining influence and regardless of all morality. His taste for magnificence had grown with his years, and his extravagance passed all bounds, as the following extract will show us more vividly than any vague allusions.

" All was gold and silver upon him and around him ; he only used spurs of gold or silver, he had mirrors of silver, his fingers were covered with diamond and ruby rings, his garments were loaded with buttons and clasps of gold or enamel. He rode a mule covered

with a golden net and a horsecloth embossed with gold from Cyprus, with a silk bridle also inlaid with gold. Of course his candlesticks, his plates and dishes, even his kitchen utensils, and all the things he used were at least of silver. . . . The most delicate perfumes scented his linen and his bed ; for his toilet he would have nothing but the finest and most costly . . . for his handkerchiefs, his sheets, etc. A morocco case held his embroidered shirts of black silk. His wardrobe, well hung with black cloth, contained a splendid assortment of clothes ; one suit of the German fashion, another in the Italian style ; all sorts of splendid garments of embroidered gold or silver, robes and mantles lined with sable, marten, and the most costly skins from Lombardy, etc. etc. . . . He adored trinkets of every kind." [1]

Everything in his palaces, his household, his festivals and Court ceremonies was on the same scale of extravagant magnificence, and the King was grasping and pitiless in exacting the needful funds by taxation of his long-suffering people. In the prime of youth and strength, he was proud of his physical courage and, living in an atmosphere of adulation, he thought himself the finest warrior in Europe and the equal of any hero of antiquity ; at once supreme as a statesman and a general. Yet at the same time he was so thoughtless and volatile that, at the most critical moment, he would forget every important affair of state in some frivolous amusement.

Unstable and untrustworthy, François I. was easily

[1] Maulde de la Clavière.

guided by his favourites and above all by his mother, who was his sincerest flatterer. Even with all these qualities we can well understand that he was a charming companion for a gay adventure or a splendid hunting party.

In this respect his rival for supremacy in Europe, the young Emperor, could not compete with him. Ascetic in his life and habits, and ever guided by the highest standard of duty, Charles V. had always been serious and reserved in manner. He weighed his words too cautiously to be lively and pleasant in conversation, and it may well be that already the shadow of that ancestral gloom hung over him, which was to develop and deepen in the coming years. "Outwardly cold and self-restrained, he was never popular like the genial Maximilian, his grandfather, but unlike him, Charles abstained from wild dreams and romantic enterprise, and showed a certain greatness in the unwearied patience and sheer tenacious perseverance with which he steadily pursued any course of action on which he had once decided." [1] He showed judgment in the choice of his ministers and was never ruled by them, after the death, in 1522, of Chièvres, who had been his tutor and adviser from childhood.

Deeply religious, his great and abiding purpose was to combine the princes of Christendom in a Crusade against the Turk, who was already threatening the Kingdom of Hungary, that bulwark of Europe so gallantly defended by Louis II., who had married the Emperor's sister Marie.

[1] "Marguerite of Austria." Christopher Hare. P. 276.

THE EMPEROR CHARLES V
After Titian

After the success of his army in driving the French out of Italy, the Emperor renewed his alliance with Henry VIII. against the King of France. They had already rejected all idea of peace or even of a truce with François I., which had been urged by the new Pope, for his own ends. As the greatest sovereign of central Italy, Clement VII. had cause to dread the success of either the Emperor or the King of France in Italy, and his subtle policy lay in keeping an even balance between the two rivals, lest the absolute defeat of one should leave the other strong enough to be independent of his support. This was a dangerous game to play, and required the most delicate handling. Clement had professed the utmost gratitude to the Emperor for the help which he had given to the election, sending word by Adrian de Croy that: "If as Cardinal he had been his servant, at this hour as Pope he looked upon the Emperor's interests as his own." At the same time "the Holy Father assured François I. that he would in no wise favour his enemies, but be a good friend and father to him. . . ."

The new Pope did not abruptly break off the League which his predecessor had made with the Empire, in conjunction with Venice, Florence, Siena and Lucca; but he did not keep its terms. He sent the first payment which had been promised, but refused to continue, under pretence that his treasury was empty. The truce which he suggested between Charles V. and François I. was refused by the latter, as he would not include the Duc de Bourbon in the articles. The efforts of Clement VII. had utterly failed so far, as on

May 25, 1524, the new League was signed. It was arranged that the Duc de Bourbon should cross the Alps at the head of his victorious army, whose pay was to be provided by the Emperor and Henry VIII.; that the King of England should send an army to Picardy which would be joined by 3000 horsemen and 1000 foot-soldiers from the Netherlands; while the Emperor himself should invade France by way of Roussillon.

But there was one matter to be settled first. Bourbon had always refused to take any oath of allegiance to Henry VIII. as King of France, or to pay him homage. This was now to be insisted upon, and Sir Richard Pace, the English ambassador, was sent to the Imperial camp at Moncalieri, near Turin, for that purpose. The strongest pressure was put upon the Duke; indeed, "one of the articles of the treaty specially stated that unless Bourbon took the required oath within two days after having been requested to do so, he would be abandoned." [1] Charles de Bourbon still refused, and argued the impolicy of such a condition. He assured the ambassador that he would recover first, all that belonged to Henry VIII. and to Charles V., and then his own possessions. Lannoy, who was present, tried to interpret this favourably, and assured Pace that "the Duke would enter France to crown His Grace the King."

Bourbon was quite willing to answer all the questions put to him. He explained the condition of his army. He said that he should prefer to approach France by

[1] State Papers. Vol. VI. p. 291.

way of Provence; he could cross the mountains in five or six days, and, keeping along the coast, protected by the Imperial fleet, he would thus cross a fertile land, with only small towns which would offer no resistance, as there were only two strong places—Monaco which would open its gates, and Marseilles must be besieged. If the King were able to collect an army and oppose him, he hoped to win the battle and march upon Lyons. "With four months before him he could do great things, and had little doubt that he would be master of Paris before All Saints' Day, and once Paris taken, all France would be in his power." He then insisted that Henry VIII. should immediately descend upon Picardy, and follow the route that had been taken the previous year by the Duke of Suffolk, or else the road through Normandy, in order to march straight upon the capital. It took several days longer and the utmost persuasion—with the assurance that if he did not yield, the King of England would withdraw, and the whole plan would collapse—before Bourbon, driven to extremity, was at last compelled to take the oath of allegiance to Henry VIII. But, as Pace writes to his master on June 25: "the Duke will not consent to pay homage."

We have no record of the torture which the proud soul of the exile endured before he consented to this ignominy, which not even the fierce joy of vengeance could lighten. He was caught in a net of his own making, and having taken the first step in the ways of rebellion, he was led on by irrevocable Fate to tread the bitter path of no return.

After this painful ordeal, we are told that the Duc de Bourbon humbly made his confession to the priest, and took the sacrament with devout fervour before crossing the frontier in company with the English ambassador. For nearly two months he had been waiting at the foot of the Alps for want of money, but now he had received 200,000 ducats which the Emperor had sent him from Genoa to pay his army. It was he who had arranged the whole plan of the campaign, and insisted that the invasion of France should be made at the same time from Provence, Languedoc and Picardy, in order that François I., having to divide his forces, would find it impossible to make adequate resistance anywhere. He fully explained this in a letter to Charles V., and then wrote (June 16) to Henry VIII. :[1] "We have decided to bring 19,000 good foot-soldiers, 1100 lances, 1500 light cavalry, with artillery thoroughly equipped with munitions. . . . We hope, by the help of God, to promote the honour and the reputation of the Emperor and yourself, and are determined to devote to this, our body, our goods, our blood and our life." Sir Richard Pace wrote to Wolsey, greatly daring in his anxiety to make sure of the English forces: "If you do not see to these matters, I shall impute to your Grace the loss of the crown of France."[2] June 25.

It was at the end of June that Bourbon crossed the Alps with his veteran soldiers, German, Spanish and Italian, who had fought under his banner and were devoted to the general who had led them to victory.

[1] State papers. [2] State papers.

He had also had the wisdom to win over Pescara without waiting for special orders from the Emperor, for we find him writing from Chiavasso on May 23: "Monseigneur, although you have written nothing about the Marquis of Pescara coming with me in this enterprise, yet knowing how important it is for your service. . . . I have invited him offering him to be Captain-General of the army under me. . . . He is a person who well deserves such a position. . . ." By a subtle piece of flattery he asked this haughty noble to be Captain-General, while at the same time he reserved to himself the supreme direction. In order still farther to attach Pescara to his service, he placed his young nephew, the Marquis del Vasto, at the head of the Spaniards. The landsknechte were commanded by the Counts de Lodron and Hohenzollern, and amongst the captains was the son of Georg Frundsberg, whose landsknechte were splendid fighters, but their allegiance depended on the regular receipt of their pay. Such was the army with which the rebel prince invaded France, in the summer of 1524.

We pause for a moment, not to concern ourselves about abstract right or wrong, but seeking to understand the point of view of Charles, Duc de Bourbon, late Constable of France.

Fortified by the most sacred rites of his Church, with a prayer to the God of battles upon his lips, he goes forth to avenge his wrongs,—a Bourbon against a Valois,—and to win back the dominions of his ancestors; those broad fertile lands, the strong castles, the beautiful palaces filled with priceless

treasures such as his soul loved, not alone for their exquisite charm, but for the haunting memory of those who had so valued them—Anne de France, his more than mother, and his wife, the gentle Suzanne. Now that he was alone, robbed of all that made life dear, with only his life left to stake upon his desperate venture, we can scarcely wonder that he should fight like a lion at bay. Not his the meek Christian virtues of patience, and submission to injustice ; like another Coriolanus, he flaunts the heathen virtue of self-assertion, and his proud spirit which cannot endure an affront, is not one " to offer the other cheek."

Victory or death is his latest motto, and a flaming sword his emblem. Charles, Duc de Bourbon, had left his country as a hunted fugitive, with a price upon his head ; he enters it again as the supreme commander of an alien army, in alliance with the enemies of François I., from whom he will wrest the crown of France or die in the attempt.

Crossing the Alpes Maritimes by an easy pass, the Col di Tenda, the army reached Monaco, whose almost impregnable citadel was given up at once by Augustin Grimaldi, Bishop of Grasse, guardian of the young seigneur, Honoré Grimaldi. This stronghold commanded a sheltered bay, which was the more important as Bourbon was expecting provisions and ammunition to arrive by sea. But the galleys of Andrea Doria of Genoa, had joined the French fleet which had just captured a brigantine with the Prince of Orange on board, and now commanded the coast. Bourbon moved onwards a few miles to establish himself in the camp of

St Laurent, on the banks of the Var which here falls into the sea. As the Spanish ships approached the camp, they were attacked by the French fleet, but most of them escaped to Monaco and there disembarked the artillery. However, three of the Imperial galleys, which had not time to follow the others, were cast on the shore and abandoned with the cannons by the sailors who fled to the mountains. They were about to be taken by the French in full sight of the camp, when the Duc de Bourbon, with splendid courage and rare promptitude, threw himself on board the most exposed of the galleys and persuaded Pescara and Adrian de Croy to do the same with the two others. "Let us save the honour of the camp and the Emperor!" he cried. The Spanish arquebusiers kept the enemy's fleet some way off, but for hours Bourbon and his companions were exposed to a sharp fire, in spite of which they saved the galleys and artillery. He wrote a very modest account of this affair himself, but Adrian de Croy thus tells the story in a letter to the Emperor on July 10: "If you had seen Mons. de Bourbon, you would have esteemed him to be one of the bravest gentlemen upon the earth. Seeing all the galleys of France who were coming to take three of yours, he commanded the Marquis and myself each to defend one, while he would rescue the other, and he showed us the way to do it. . . . Never was seen a more gallant deed. . . ."

Having received his artillery, Bourbon now proceeded through Provence, meeting with no serious resistance. Vence, Antibes, Cannes, and Grasse at

once yielded to him, and we can trace his onward journey through the red porphyry hills of the Esterel, by the ancient Aurelian way, where the Roman legions had tramped of old, as far as Fréjus, for in those days there was no road by the rocky sea-coast. Draguignan Lorgues, Hyères, Cotignac, Brignoles, and most of the other towns of Provence where the army passed, surrendered at the first summons, and when Bourbon came in sight of Aix, the keys were delivered up to him.

Meantime he had been constantly sending letters to the Emperor and to Henry VIII., urging them to lose no time in their invasion of France, for everything depended on the attacks being simultaneous. As they still delayed, a council was held and the chief captains decided upon the siege of Marseilles, as nothing was so bad for their army as inaction. Bourbon and Pescara, after examining the fortifications, both decided that it would be a most difficult enterprise. Still Marseilles would be of so much importance to the Emperor in opening his route from Barcelona to Genoa, and making him master of the Mediterranean, that it was all-important to secure the city. Ancient Marseilles did not spread out towards the south as at present, but was concentrated for defence in terraces up the side of the hill crowned with walls and towers where it formed an amphitheatre. It was protected by the sea on two sides, while on the other two, there were very strong fortifications, walls flanked with bastions full of towers and guarded by ditches. The famous port was entirely protected, and the city itself was so difficult of access that it was capable of standing a long siege.

The King of France had sent the commissioner Mirandel to Marseilles only the month before to examine the fortifications, and to add to them wherever he might consider it necessary. Mirandel had demolished two convents of the Dominicans and Frères Mineurs, and also three important churches, which being too near, on the outside of the town, would have helped the attack and interfered with the defence. All the dead who were buried within these sacred edifices, were carried in solemn procession within the walls to another resting place. The military architect also caused all the suburbs, the gardens, and the "pleasure houses" within arquebuse-shot from the east and west, to be destroyed and levelled with the ground. Nothing was thus wanting for security, and François I. had been well-advised to make all these preparations in good time.

The garrison had been strengthened by a number of soldiers who had served in Italy under the command of Renzo da Ceri of the noble House of the Orsini, and two or three hundred men-at-arms were sent there under Chabot de Brion. Besides about 4000 regular soldiers, the inhabitants of Marseilles were eager in the defence, and organised into a militia and enrolled from the different quarters under their own captains. The city was well provided with arms and ammunition, and Renzo da Ceri, who had great experience in the art of fortification, was placed in command. "He set diligently to work at repairing the walls, in making platforms, and also in finishing the great boulevard, of which the walls were 28 feet thick, and which was

well furnished with artillery." We learn this, and many interesting details of the siege, from a MS. journal kept by a certain Honorat de Valbelle who took part in the defence of the town.

Several of the gates of Marseilles were closed and walled up, while those still left were protected with outworks. At the gate of La Calade, and at the Porte-Royale, both towards the east, bastions were built surrounded by trenches, with cannons and arquebuses which swept the approach so that no one could come near on that side. Every one joined with enthusiasm in the digging and building which was to ensure the safety of the town. Besides the artillery on the ramparts, pieces of cannon were placed on every eminence, so as to command the plain which stretched out towards the north. Having the sea open and the harbour free to receive provisions and help, and protected by the French fleet which was stationed close to the island of Pomègue, the inhabitants were prepared to face, with gallant spirit, the coming siege. Bourbon was already at their gates. With consummate skill, he had occupied the heights which surrounded the town from east to west, placing the landsknechte near the sea, the Spaniards towards the plain of St Michel, and the Italians between the two. The point of attack was to be towards the north, from the Franciscan convent to the Aix gate, over a space of about 1000 steps which appeared less strongly protected. It included the Tower of Sainte-Paule, outside the ramparts, and the old church of St Cannat with the Bishop's house within.

A battery was first placed on the height which commanded the French fleet as it approached the shore, in order to drive it out into the open sea. Then the soldiers, well protected by gabions, were set to work at night undermining the walls, which the besieged found themselves unable to prevent, and after four days, Bourbon brought his cannons in position to bombard the walls at the point of attack. On August 23, a breach of about thirty feet was made, but unfortunately, the Imperial army did not press on to the assault at once, and during the following night the breach was completely closed by casks filled with earth, stones and beams of wood ; a second rampart had even been built inside. The attacking generals, thinking their cannons were not powerful enough at the distance they were placed, now depended almost entirely upon sapping and undermining the walls. Bourbon sent Adrian de Croy to Toulon where there was much stronger artillery, and with the help of Moncada who besieged the fortress by sea, he was successful in taking the formidable Tower of Toulon, and gaining possession of nine good cannons on September 2.

Meantime, the defenders of Marseilles had realised the new danger which threatened them and they rose to the occasion. During that terrible day and night when they expected the city to be assaulted at any moment, the troops and the inhabitants in arms had manned the ramparts, paraded the streets, and prepared in every way to give the enemy a warm reception. But this mining had to be met in another

way. Without a scruple, they destroyed the beautiful church of Saint-Cannat, and the " sumptuous pleasure house " of the Bishop adjoining, as well as other houses near by. The ramparts being thus cleared, Renzo da Ceri caused very deep trenches to be dug within and counter-mines to be made.

Everyone joined in this work, even the women of Marseilles, and we have a most delightful account of the way in which the rich and delicate ladies joined with the poorer and more robust women of the people in the patriotic work of protecting their homes. The record of this devotion is still preserved in the city in the " Boulevard des Dames," on the very spot where they so gallantly worked in the trenches.

The trenches were protected by mounds of earth, pierced with loop-holes (" meurtrières ") behind which were placed the most reliable arquebusiers. Besides these measures of defence, the besieged disturbed their enemies' manoeuvres by constant sorties, even venturing as far as the Imperial camp. Day and night they were on guard, and the streets were kept lighted by torches, and lanterns in the windows of the houses, to be on the watch for a surprise. As time passed on with scarcely any result, a feeling of discouragement spread through the attacking army, and even the leaders began to lose heart, with the exception of Bourbon, who felt assured of ultimate success. He had at last received through Sir John Russell, some of the money long before promised by Henry VIII. towards paying his army, and he had been rejoined by a portion of the troops he had left

in Piedmont, when unable to pay the money due to them. He had again sent urgent messages both to the Emperor and to the King of England, and now received assurance from both princes that they would carry out their engagements and land their forces in France.

Before making use of the big cannons which had been brought to the camp from Toulon, the Duc de Bourbon demanded an interview with Renzo da Ceri and the other captains, in order to convince them that resistance was useless, and that they would be wise to ensure a favourable capitulation while there was still time. But the answer returned was an absolute refusal to hold any parley, except with the shots of cannon and arquebuse. Sismondi tells us that Renzo da Ceri felt the more confidence, as the Italians who served under him were veteran soldiers who had fought on the side of liberty in Pisa, Florence, Genoa and elsewhere.

Still there was a growing uneasiness in Marseilles, and two envoys were chosen to seek the King at once and implore him to come to their help. They left the port by sea, landed near the mouth of the Rhone, and found François I. at Caderousse, a little above Avignon. He was there with a large army, having just succeeded in obtaining a levy of more than 6000 Swiss, but he had been obliged to pay them beforehand, because they would not trust him again. His infantry had also been increased by two companies of landsknechte and some French adventurers ; and not fearing attack from England or Flanders, he had

recalled the greater part of the men-at-arms who were protecting the north-west frontier. This one fact is enough to show us how fatal to the cause had been the delay of Henry VIII.

The King received the deputies from Marseilles with great honour, praising their courage and loyalty, and promising to march to the deliverance of their city. He also sent a letter to encourage his brave citizens in their gallant conduct, thanking them most warmly, and "promising them that their loyal fidelity should be had in perpetual remembrance, that it might serve as an example to others." He also gave more practical help in sending by sea a small troop of 1500 men with supplies of provisions and flour.

At a time when prompt action was so necessary, François I. had been delayed at Blois by his constant interference with the Parliament of Paris in the trial of Charles de Bourbon and his adherents, which was still going on. He was constantly sending angry messages and threats to the commissioners, to insist upon the severity of the sentences they must pass, more especially upon Aymard de Prie, d'Escars, the Chancellor of the Bourbonnais Popillon, Desguières and Brion. The judges continued to make further questions, and when at length they gave sentence, it seemed to the angry King like an acquittal. They decided that Aymard de Prie, Pierre Popillon and d'Escars should be set at liberty and sent to live in any town of the realm which the King might choose. It is true that sentence of death was passed upon all

who had followed the Duke out of the kingdom. But François I. was furious at the leniency with which these three had been treated, and he wrote to the Parliament, in such a tone of defiance and threat, as if they were favourable to the rebellion. "The prisoners should not be set free . . ." and when the judges remonstrated that at least their sentence must be published lest people should accuse them of injustice, the King's answer passed all bounds. He would listen to nothing, and if they dared to disobey him or displease him, "he would make such a demonstration as would be an example for others." At the same time he ordered that the third citation against the Duc de Bourbon should be at once given against him. He wished the Parliament to condemn him as a rebel, while he went to fight against him as a public enemy.

Thus it was that from every town where he halted, the King of France sent back letter after letter to his Parliament in Paris, like javelin shafts hurled at the unfortunate men of law who tarried in obeying his commands.

CHAPTER XII

SIEGE OF MARSEILLES RAISED, AS NEITHER CHARLES V. NOR HENRY VIII. KEEP THEIR PROMISE OF INVADING FRANCE—RETREAT OF BOURBON TO ITALY—FRANÇOIS I. AGAIN INVADES ITALY—HE BESIEGES PAVIA—CLEMENT VII. BEGINS HIS CRAFTY TACTICS OF MAKING FRIENDS WITH BOTH SIDES.

WHEN the two deputies, whose names are recorded as Pierre Cépède and Jean Bègue, returned from the royal camp, the principal inhabitants of Marseilles were summoned by the call of a trumpet to hear the King's letter read aloud to them. This excited so much enthusiasm that they felt fresh courage for the assault which threatened them. Bourbon had brought up the great cannons taken from Toulon, and the artillery continued such a furious bombardment at the place of the old breach, that the rampart was broken down for about fifty feet at the upper part, but much less at the base. There was room for ten men to enter abreast by this opening, and the Duke, thinking it sufficient, silenced his cannons and prepared for the final assault.

The defenders were well prepared, for they had manned all the ramparts and other posts with about 6000 soldiers. The arquebusiers and carbineers were to fire upon the assailants from the bottom of the trenches and the top of the bastions, while the men-at-

arms in their impenetrable armour, were to drive them back with the edge of the halberd or the point of the lance, if the firing was not enough. The immense ditch between the breach and the town had been filled with explosive machines, gunpowder and inflammable things, which could easily be set on fire from the rampart above. The gallant courage and resolution, both of the soldiers and the inhabitants, was a more solid defence than even walls and guns.

The unconquerable spirit of Bourbon himself was a match for them, as he led the attack, but his army quailed before the thought of these terrible trenches to cross, and this array of death-dealing guns, of halberds and lances, pointed at them by determined men. The landsknechte, who were sent on in front to escalade the breach, turned back at the first burst of artillery, declaring that they would not meet certain death. The Spaniards, who were next in order, followed their lead, at which we cannot wonder when their leader, Pescara, had thus addressed them :—

" The besieged have made ready a fine table to treat those who visit them. If you want to sup in Paradise to-day, then go forward. If, like myself, you have no such desire, then follow me to Italy. . . ."

The Italians, who had caught the infection of fear, also refused to advance, and the unfortunate Bourbon, in despair at this disobedience, was compelled to lead back the rebellious army to the camp, and give up all idea of taking Marseilles by assault. If he had also to deal with jealousy and even hatred on the part of

Pescara and others, as well as the panic of the men, his case was hopeless indeed. But he made one last desperate effort to induce his followers, if they would not face the assault, at least to try what battle in the open field might do for them. He called a council of war, and pointed out that the King's army was close at hand and might be taken by surprise . . . nothing but such a victory could retrieve the position and the honour of the Imperial army. But the captains would not listen to him; they declared that there was nothing left but to retire from Provence as soon as possible and return to Italy.

Can we imagine a more cruel, heart-breaking situation than that in which the great Duc de Bourbon found himself placed? First prince of the blood royal, late Constable of France, a sovereign in his own dominions and surrounded by a Court of his own with faithful vassals to do his will, he now found himself defied by his own army of alien troops who could not understand his language, and who ruined his plans by their insubordination. Everything was against him; he had been cheated and deceived on every side. Charles V., who was to have invaded Roussillon, had made great promises, had been slow in sending orders, and in the end had done nothing at all. On August 15, he had written to Bourbon: "Mon bon frere, following your advice, I have ordered the German troops to invade by way of Perpignan, and so divert the power of our enemy. . . ."[1] The

[1] Simancas Papers. Series D., bundle 3. No. 54. Quoted by Mignet.

Emperor had also commanded Lannoy to reinforce the army of Bourbon and to send him 100,000 ducats towards paying his army. This the Viceroy had not done, and he writes to excuse himself on September 28, from Asti, pretending that the soldiers had not been able to cross the mountains as the mountaineers had taken possession of the Pass of Tenda (between Tenda and Cuneo, where the Maritime Alps end and the Ligurian Alps begin). In point of fact, Charles V. cared much more for driving the French King out of Italy, and compelling him to give him back Burgundy, than for the concerted plan of conquering the kingdom to give it to Henry VIII., in great measure.

As for the English invasion, which was so absolutely necessary for the success of Bourbon's great scheme of conquest, we see now that Wolsey had never meant it to be carried out until François I. should have been utterly defeated by the Imperial army, when Henry VIII. would come in and secure the spoils. The warning of Sir Richard Pace, that if Wolsey did not see that the expedition to Picardy was sent off at once, he would have lost his master the crown of France, received a reply from the proud Cardinal, in terms of bitter irony. "You demand that the King with all possible haste . . . should invade France . . . and to facilitate the enterprise you expect me to pawn my Cardinal's hat, my crosses, my fortune and myself." [1]

It was the second time that Bourbon's plans of

[1] Letter from Wolsey to Sir R. Pace, August 31, 1524. (State Papers, Vol. VI. p. 336.)

revenge had failed, and certainly not by his own fault. Private news reached him that the Queen-mother, Louise de Savoie, his vindictive foe, had taken possession of all his treasures in the stately castle of Chantelle, with special mention of his long robe of cloth of gold, lined with the most costly sables, which he wore at Court as Constable of France. (It held 12 yards at 120 gold crowns the yard.) She had taken also his Constable's cap, covered with precious stones, beyond all price, and as a crowning insult she had destroyed his shields bearing his image—as a knight raising on high a naked sword—while the trappings of his horse were covered with fleurs-de-lys. Perhaps a small matter like this made him realize more keenly all that he had lost. News of his prolonged trial also showed how all his adherents had betrayed him, more or less, although a few faithful friends had followed his fortunes and would remain true to the end. Pompérant, his devoted companion, sentenced to a fearful death by the judges, Pierre and Antoine d'Espinac, Jean Fialin, Peloux and La Mothe des Noyers, while some others in France only waited for the chance to join him.

Bourbon felt that in the present temper of his army he had no choice but to retreat into Italy. But he was in no haste, and his preparations were slow and deliberate. All the bullets and stone shot which he could not carry away were thrown into the sea, four great cannons were buried, while other pieces of artillery were drawn by horses to Toulon and there embarked for Genoa. The small cannons were placed

A. Giraudon, photo.

LOUISE DE SAVOIE, MOTHER OF FRANÇOIS I
Après Jean Clouet, Bibliotheque Nationale

on mules, and on September 29 the camp was raised and the army returned by the way it had come.

All this time the King of France had been awaiting events, not without anxiety, but as soon as the retreat had actually begun, he sent the Maréchal de Montmorency at the head of several companies of men-at-arms, a band of arquebusiers, and a number of light cavalry, to harass the retiring army. Montmorency had orders to attack without exposing himself, to fall upon them if the chance occurred—and thus continue as far as the river Var, when he was to cross the mountains and join François I. in Italy, where he was leading his army over the Col de Susa, and down through Turin. We have full particulars of the retreat of Bourbon with the Imperial army, from the Spanish soldier, Juan de Oznayo. He tells how they travelled on day and night. "Con toda furia, y nuestro camin era de die e de noche."

The Marquis of Pescara was in command of the rear-guard, and was especially watchful that none of his men should fall into the hands of the peasants who hung about close after them, as he feared that might encourage them to pursue and murder any stragglers. Osnayo says that on one occasion Pescara could not rouse from their drunken slumber a few landsknechte who had drunk too much of the country wine. The light cavalry of Montmorency was within sight, and the countrymen were only waiting for his departure to massacre the sleeping Germans. He ordered the barn, which he could not induce them to leave, to be

set on fire, and sternly continued his retreat. The soldiers were worn out with fatigue, their clothes were in rags, and they are even said to have thrown away their arms as they no longer had the strength to carry them. When oxen and sheep were killed for their food, the first thing they did was to tear off the skin and cut it into strips to make "abarcas," a rough kind of Spanish sandal. They would say, as they murmured against Bourbon, "that these were the brocaded shoes he had promised them when he led them to France." But no vain complaints could touch the dauntless pride of their commander, or quench his undying hope that the day of vengeance was at hand. The ceaseless tramp of many feet, the clouds of dust in which the battalions were half hidden, the glaring autumn sun upon the hot Riviera, the calm blue sea which had seen them march to victory in France with the same changeless smile—all was forgotten by Bourbon as he rode unmoved ever onwards and onwards, his spirit wrapped in the absorbing dream of conquest and empire.

The next Act of the great Drama was about to take place in Italy, and if Charles Duc de Bourbon was to be one of the chief characters, the King of France was fully resolved to play the part of the hero.

Once more an invincible attraction had drawn François I. to the conquest of that fair land which had been so fatal to his race, but whose allurements he could never resist. All his hopes and desires were set upon that great fertile plain, enriched by many a

classic river, which spread out towards the south as far as Naples. An ideal battle-field, all prepared by Nature, closed in by mountains like the lists of a tournament ; and fit scene for a romance of chivalry, bristling with a thousand castles and ancient cities only waiting to be stormed. Never had the King been so confident of success as when he set forth from Aix, at the head of a splendid army, to ascend the valley of the Durance, by Sisteron and Briançon, to cross the Alps by the Mont Genèvre ; the Mons Janus of the Romans, ever the pathway of invading hosts. François would listen to no objection, he would admit of no delay. In vain his most experienced captains pointed out to him that now, in October, the season was too advanced, and that it was unwise to start a winter campaign. The spirit which animated the King is well shown in his own account of the address to his soldiers on the summit of the Alps.

". . . O souldards et amys,
Puisque Fortune en ce lieu nous a mys
Favorisons la sienne volonté
Par la vertu de nostre honnesteté,
En ne craignant des grandz montz la haultesse,
Vous asseurant sur ma foy et promesse
Que si premier sommes en Italie,
Que sans combat guerre sera finie. . . ." [1]

Curiously enough, the French army reached Vercelli on the same day as the troops of Bourbon crossed the Maritime Alps and advanced towards Alba, but François I. was scarcely justified in promising that the

[1] " Epistre du roi traictant de son partement de France en Italie et de sa prise devant Pavie." No. 25, in " Captivité " de Champollion Figeac.

war would be ended without a battle! The weather had greatly favoured him in the mountains, for snow had not yet fallen on the slopes, and the passes were open. When he reached the valley, there had been no autumnal rains to flood the rivers, and they could still be crossed at the fords. All seemed to promise well for the French, and they met with no opposition in their advance towards Milan.

In point of fact, Lannoy, who had lingered on at Asti with the foot-soldiers so much needed by Bourbon, was very anxious to hinder the French invasion, but when he saw the worn-out condition of the Imperial army, after so hurried and fatiguing a retreat, he was easily convinced by Bourbon and Pescara that it would be folly to risk an engagement. It was decided to defend only some important places, which would give the command of certain rivers; such as Alessandria on the Tanaro, where they left 2000 men, Como on the lake, Pavia on the Ticino, Cremona on the Po, Lodi and Pizzighetone on the Adda. The importance of Pavia was fully appreciated and the garrison was strengthened by the addition of 300 men-at-arms, 5000 Germans, and 500 Spaniards. The command was given to Antonio de Leyva, a Spanish soldier of fortune, who fully justified Bourbon's confidence in him. Lannoy sent to Germany for a levy of 10,000 landsknechte to help in the defence of Milan, whither the rest of the Imperial army was advancing in haste.

The city was in no condition to make a strong defence, as it had recently suffered severely from the

plague. Girolamo Morone, the minister of Duke Francesco Sforza, had persuaded him to bow before the storm and yield Milan to the King of France, sending the keys to meet him. But the very day after this submission, Alarçon with 200 horsemen arrived at the gates and announced the coming of his generals, the lieutenants of the Emperor; being soon followed by Bourbon, Lannoy, and Pescara, who were received by the populace with cries of "Viva Borbone!" It was a comical situation, and became still more so when François I. hurried on with his army to take possession of Milan which had already surrendered to him. After a rapid consultation, the Imperialists decided that the city was not ready for defence, and they retreated by the gate of Como and the gate of Rome, at the very moment when the French army was triumphantly entering by the gate of Vercelli. Bourbon, Pescara, and most of the army made their way to Lodi, which they set about placing in a position to stand a siege.

François I. placed the Seigneur de la Trémouille in command of Milan with a strong force, 8000 foot-soldiers and 300 men-at-arms, added to the garrison. Never had his position in Italy been more promising than at this moment. Most of the Italian States, the fickle Pope Clement VII., and the republics of Florence and Venice, who were only waiting to see which side was successful, were quite ready to join him. He only needed some great master of military strategy, such as his exiled Constable of France, and his success might have been secured. But he listened

once more to the advice of Bonnivet, and by unwise delay, lost his opportunity of defeating the Imperial army while still scattered, and in a state of fatigue and depression. Machiavelli tells us that Pasquino in Rome, offered a reward "for the discovery of the Imperial army, lost some time last October in the mountains between France and Lombardy, and never heard of since!"

By the advice of Bonnivet, the King of France took another false step. Instead of at once attacking Lodi, before Bourbon could strengthen the fortifications and receive reinforcements, he decided to begin with the siege of Pavia, thinking that this would be an easy matter, and he arrived before the walls of the city just twenty days after he had set forth from Aix (having there beheaded the unfortunate Mayor, who had sworn fidelity to Bourbon). Throughout the whole of this campaign we shall find that Bonnivet was the King's evil genius; having first lost the duchy of Milan, it was he who effectually prevented its re-conquest.

When Bourbon and Pescara, who were anxiously engaged in fortifying Lodi, heard that François I. was moving towards Pavia, they could scarcely believe in their good fortune, for time to recover and recruit was all that they needed. The French army was so greatly superior to that of the Emperor as to induce Bourbon to make a desperate effort for obtaining additional troops. For this purpose it was necessary to raise money at once and a brilliant idea occurred to him. The Duke of Savoy, brother of Louise, the

mother of François I., had recently married Beatrix of Portugal, whose elder sister Isabel, was betrothed to Charles V. In former days the Duke had been devoted to his sister Louise and to the side of France, but possibly through the influence of his young wife, he had now completely changed and become a warm adherent of the Emperor. On the strength of this knowledge, Charles de Bourbon hastened to Grenoble and succeeded in persuading the Duchess to pawn once more the same precious jewels on which Charles VIII. had borrowed money from the Bank of Genoa for his Italian campaign. To these Bourbon added some priceless family gems of his own, and having secured on these good letters of exchange, he posted straight to Nuremberg where he induced, Georg Frundsberg, Prince of Mindelheim, to join him.

This Frundsberg was a gentleman adventurer, who had succeeded von Vickingen, in the management of Imperial matters and as military leader. He was a man of gigantic height and extraordinary strength ; jealous for the reputation of the German soldiers, who had of late been somewhat eclipsed by the Swiss levies. He attributed this to the inefficiency of the German condottieri, and proposed to remedy it in future by rallying the landsknechte under his own banner or that of leaders of his family. Besides this, he had been one of the first to declare himself on the side of Luther, and so great was his hatred of the Pope, that he asked nothing better than to pass into Italy and await an opportunity of waging war against the occupant of St Peter's chair.

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Bourbon found Frundsberg in this mood, and employed his powers of persuasion so well that in three weeks 10,000 veteran soldiers had been raised, on condition that the Prince of Mindelheim should command them. These troops were at once sent off to Italy, and Bourbon went into the duchy of Würtemberg, where the Count of Lodron had already collected 6000 men with the money which he had received. These troops Bourbon proposed to lead himself into Italy, but he was still awaiting an answer from Henry VIII., to whom he had sent the most urgent entreaties that he would take advantage of the absence of the King and his army, and at once invade France from the north. On January 5, 1525, he writes again to Wolsey :

" . . . Monsieur, I have been to the Archduke (Ferdinand, brother of Charles V.), to point out to him the affairs of the Emperor and yours ; I found him as well disposed as possible, even willing to help in person. He sends 2000 landsknechte, and 300 horsemen, all at his own expense, besides other bands of Germans that I take with me, a good number, as I told your ambassador. . . .

" Monsieur, I have heard from one of my servants and friends that the French say that I retired shamefully from Provence ; I remained there during three months and eight days, awaiting battle, for I desired nothing else. The cause why I retired from Provence, which was by no will of mine, I think you will learn from your ambassador. . . . In my retreat those

who pursued me gained nothing, and with the help of God, they will do so still less in future. . . . Monsieur, in repeating my good will towards you, I would again tell you that never before, nor will you ever have again so good a time for invading the kingdom of France as at present ; insomuch as the King and all the princes of France, as well as the chief captains are over yonder, and you will meet with no resistance. I have declared the whole matter to your ambassador. . . .

"I pray our Lord that to you Monsieur, He will deign to give a very good and long life. . . .

"Written at Trent, this 5 January.

"Your very humble and very obedient servant,

"CHARLES."

But again all Bourbon's efforts were in vain. The expedition to Provence had failed because neither the Emperor nor Henry VIII. had kept their engagements, and now that he had made all arrangements to join Henry VIII. in Picardy, in case of an invasion, this too came to nothing, and he led his reinforcement of landsknechte back to Lodi, where he arrived on January 10. In a letter written ten days later by the Viceroy Lannoy to Marguerite of Austria, Governor of the Netherlands, we see how fully Bourbon's energy and devotion were appreciated.

"LODI, 17 *January* 1525.

"Madame, monsieur de Bourbon arrived here a week ago . . . with the landsknechte. . . . He has done the Emperor good service, and His Majesty is

greatly indebted to him in every way. . . . I own to him and will pay him all possible honour, for he is well worth it.

". . . CHARLES DE LANNOY."

It was indeed a fortunate thing for France that Henry VIII., either from suspicion or from motives of avarice, refused to listen to the suggestion that he should invade France at this critical moment, when in all probability he would have carried everything before him, with the help of Bourbon. In a letter to Wolsey of this date, we are told that " the Duc de Bourbon had more friends in France than ever before," and that " he had a very great reputation in France." The events of the next month were to add still further to his fame and influence.

If the support of Henry VIII. had proved but a broken reed to the Emperor, it was far worse with his other allies in Italy. They all looked upon François I. as the future conqueror and hastened to cultivate his friendship. The Duke of Ferrara lent him 50,000 crowns and sent him fifty chariots laden with powder and bullets, for which the King's receipts, on parchment, are still to be seen. The Venetians were in negotiation with him, following the example of Pope Clement VII., whose crafty policy was to play the part of a peacemaker between Charles V. and François I., but taking care all the time to remain on the side of the conqueror. He sent his Datario (head of papal secretaries), Matteo Giberti, the staunch friend of France, to suggest to the Viceroy Lannoy that the

Emperor should give up all the cities he possessed in Italy, into the charge of the Pope, and retire to his Kingdom of Naples, while Milan should be an appanage of a son of François I., and the French should be advised to return home across the Alps, ect., etc. Naturally Lannoy refused to listen to such terms, and when they were proposed to the King of France, he indignantly declined to be satisfied with anything short of the kingdom of Naples and the duchy of Milan.

But Clement VII. was not discouraged, and continued the deceitful game which was to be so fatal to him in the end. He secretly sent 6000 ducats to Lannoy, instead of the large subsidy which he had promised, and a few days later, on December 12, he concluded a very *private treaty* with the King of France, in which both France and Venice were comprised; but a curious letter from the Council of Ten, on January 7, provides that they will not join the King of France (Christianissimo Re) nor will they help Charles V. in recovering Milan.

We can form some idea of the duplicity of the Holy Father from the letters of Baldassare Castiglione, that honest and high-minded gentleman, whom he sent as Nuncio to Charles V. In absolute ignorance of the secret treaty, he had orders (on his way to Spain) to meet the Viceroy Lannoy at Cremona, and assure him of the unchanging favour of his master; then he was to see La Trémouille at Milan, and travelling onwards, to seek an interview with the French King in the camp before Pavia.

" December 26, 1524. Al Signor Datario. (Giovan Matteo Giberti) . . . To-day I went into the camp and did homage to the King and gave him the Brief . . . and told him about my going to the Emperor, together with . . . all the intentions of His Holiness, who desires nothing but the general peace and quiet of Christendom, without respect of persons. . . . The King, with many words well spoken and with much courtesy, replied to me that he was quite certain that Nostro Signore would do nothing without the highest motives ; and that His Holiness had never had a more obedient and affectionate son than himself. . . . Then with infinite reasoning, he tried to justify the occasion of his war . . . and showed that those who said that he disturbed the peace of Europe were wrong ; because he only asked for that which was his by right . . . and so continued, showing great reverence to Nostro Signore and firm hope of victory. . . . "

We can imagine the amusement of the Most Christian King, with the secret treaty in his possession, pouring out all these platitudes to the simple-minded, upright ambassador,[1] who was so thoroughly deceived.

The Pope did not even make any remonstrance when François I. sent an army into the kingdom of Naples under the command of the Duke of Albany, consisting of 6000 foot-soldiers and 600 men-at-arms, which was to be strengthened by two or three thousand

[1] Courts and Camps of the Renaissance, p. 154.—Christopher Hare.

soldiers from the fleet under Renzo da Ceri, and 4000 Italians whom the Orsini were to raise in their dominions. It is amusing to learn from the King's own poetical history of the campaign, written in captivity, that this was done only as a diversion, in the hope of drawing away part of the Imperial army from Lombardy.

"Car de mes gens soubdain je feiz partir
Pour seulement servir de divertir :
A Naples droit, j'envoyay une bande.
La diligence alors leur recommande ;
Mais au rebours ilz furent negligens,
De tost aller trop paresseurs et lentz." [1]

[1] Poesies de François I. See "Captivité" (Epître du Roi), No. 25.

CHAPTER XIII

THE SIEGE OF PAVIA BY THE FRENCH—DESCRIPTION OF THE CITY—FRANÇOIS I. ENGAGES THE SERVICES OF GIOVANNI "DELLE BANDE NERE"—HIS FRIEND THE ARETINO—THE SIEGE LINGERS ON THROUGH THE WINTER, GIVING BOURBON TIME TO RAISE LANDSKNECHTE IN GERMANY—GREAT HARDSHIPS ENDURED BY THE BESIEGED UNDER ANTONIO DE LEYVA—GIOVANNI DEI MEDICI WOUNDED AFTER A SORTIE.

WE have now reached the most exciting point of Charles de Bourbon's history; the famous siege of Pavia on which depended the fate of empire. It was on October 26 that François I. arrived in sight of the ancient city, once the capital of the Lombards, "conspicuous in fame and splendour," [1] whose walls had withstood for a time the hosts of Theodoric and of Charlemagne. In later days the Ghibelline city had always been on the side of the Emperor. Famous in story as in art, "royal Pavia" justly prided herself on her splendid churches and mediæval monuments, and her unrivalled university, where learned men from all lands came to learn or teach every art and every science. The very ideal of a fortified city, she was enclosed by a great circuit of massive walls, strengthened by many towers, flanked by solid bastions, and defended by deep moats. On the side towards Milan, to the north, stood the great Castello of the

[1] Gibbon.

Visconti, at once a citadel and a palace, only reached through strongly fortified gates and drawbridges.

To the south, Pavia was defended by the fast-flowing Ticino, rising from the Lago Maggiore and passing on to unite its waters with the river Po, after dividing to form an island on which was built the suburb of Sant' Antonio, joined to the city by a covered bridge and defended by a small tower. There was less protection on the western side, as the river was at some distance, and between its banks and the walls there rose, one above the other, the beautiful abbey of San-Lanfranco, the church of San-Salvator, and the Bergaretto. To the north of Pavia, beyond the Castello, was that wonderful park of Mirabello, many square miles in extent, with its stately pleasure-house, fortified like a castle, where the early dukes of Milan took their ease in "la belle saison," and enjoyed the delights of the chase. In this magnificent hunting-ground, enclosed by high walls, gay and courtly companies had pursued the stags and the red deer; they had let fly their falcons to chase the herons and water-fowl along the lake, amid those "flowery lawns watered by crystal streams, and the groves of plane and cypress and myrtle," which excited the enthusiasm of travellers like Commines from the colder north.

It was to this earthly paradise that the French King brought the dread reality and horrors of war, in the light-hearted assurance that he had an easy task before him. He took up his own position to the west of the city, in the space between the Ticino and

the walls, with Bonnivet, the Bastard of Savoy, and the greater part of his army. The Maréchal de Montmorency was sent to establish himself in the island south of Pavia, in the suburb of Sant' Antonio. Du Bellay, who was present at the siege, says that "the said seigneur de Montmorency had with him 3000 landsknechte, 2000 Italians, 1000 Corsicans, and 200 men-at-arms. In order to gain this suburb, he was obliged to take a tower which was on the bridge; and having gained it, he caused it to be repaired and fortified, causing those he had found within, to be hung, for having been so outrageous as to attempt the defence of such a 'fowlhouse' ('pouillier') against a French army." This tower commanded the bridge which led to the city, and which Antonio de Leyva, the governor, immediately had destroyed. We shall have occasion to note the wonderful energy, forethought and skill of this remarkable man who had sworn to Bourbon that he would never surrender, and who conducted the defence with the most precise and rigorous care, regulating, to the smallest details, the life of the soldiers and the inhabitants. He had a strong garrison of 5000 German landsknechte, 500 Spanish arquebusiers, 300 men-at-arms, and 200 light cavalry, and he organised all the able-bodied inhabitants into a strong militia. Leyva had already done his best for the defence of the city, by replacing any stones which had fallen from the walls, and dug deep trenches inside any places likely to be taken by assault, filled with inflammable material and ready to receive charges of gunpowder.

When Chabannes de la Palisse with the advance guard had taken his post on the heights which commanded the town to the east; and the park of Mirabello was occupied by the Duc d'Alençon and San-Severino, Pavia was completely invested. As soon as the big cannons had arrived, trenches were opened to approach the town, and on November 6, the batteries were placed in position and the attack began from the east and the west. It was not until after three days and nights of ceaseless firing, that the walls had given way enough to leave breaches of sufficient size for an assault. François I. actually expected to take Pavia by one sharp attack, which he commanded from the west, while La Palisse led it on the eastern side. The soldiers managed to scale the broken walls, with great loss, but on reaching the top they met with the most obstinate and vigorous resistance. The assailants, whose ranks had been thinned by shots from the city, were received on the breach with pikes ten feet long, vigorously used by sturdy landsknechte. Leyva had skilfully placed his men under the Comte de Lordon to face the attack of La Palisse, and under the Comte de Hohenzollern on the side where the King was, while he himself was ever at the point of hottest attack. This murderous reception continued for about an hour until the French were compelled to retire, with terrible loss. De Lannoy, writing to Charles V., says " that fatal Tuesday cost the enemy 2500 men, as he hears from his spies." [1]

The King however was not discouraged, and decided

[1] This was probably exaggerated.

to return to the assault next day. He wished to send his men-at-arms on foot, to lead the way, but we are not surprised that this plan did not come off, as once before it had failed with such fatal result, when the knights of Maximilian before Padua, refused to attack on foot, and the Emperor fled that night, in disgust at their disobedience.

The King was informed that behind the breaches in the walls, there were deep trenches ready for explosion, and that arquebusiers were placed in the crenelated houses near, so that a fresh attack would probably cause still greater loss of life without result and he was compelled to give it up. Another suggestion was made to him, that he should attack Pavia from the south, and in order to do this, it was proposed that he should change the course of the nearest branch of the Ticino. It was a hazardous plan, but François I. at once adopted it. While the French were engaged in digging another bed for the river, and preparing to block up the water with stones and earth, Antonio de Leyva did his best to fortify the southern walls, which had been somewhat neglected, as he had trusted in his river bulwark. But at this moment of peril, the heavens in their courses fought on his side, for such tempests of rain fell as to flood the Ticino, whose impetuous waters carried away the earthworks and destroyed all the labour of the foe. The river was not destined to prove a traitor to the fair city which it had so long protected.

So far the King had met with nothing but failure, but he was as self-confident as ever. If Pavia could

not be taken by storm he would reduce it by famine, and change from a siege to a blockade, while losing no opportunity of harassing the garrison.

He increased his army, already so large, by sending for 5000 additional foot-soldiers from the Grisons. He also had the great good fortune to enrol in his service one of the bravest, if the most unscrupulous, of the condottieri of the day.

Giovanni delle Bande Nere, the "warrior of the Medici family," was the son of Catarina Sforza, the famous Madonna of Forli, by her third husband, the diplomatic and "popular" Giovanni dei Medici; he seems to have inherited all the striking qualities of his mother, with more than a touch of that brutality, so common in his time and his profession. But this young prince had so vivid and dazzling a personality that neither friend nor foe can ever speak of him in sober language. He was another Hector, a hero of the Iliad, an ancient warrior, a Paladin, victorious alike in love and in war, so profusely generous that he would give up the spoils of a city to his men, and yet so rapacious for lands and money, that he would pounce upon them like a hawk on his prey. Through the troubled chronicles of intrigue and treachery, of sieges and battles, of treaties and alliances, the name of Giovanni dei Medici resounds like the clash of lances or the call of a trumpet.

In previous campaigns he had fought on the side of the Emperor, but in truth his inclination and policy made him subservient to the will of his kinsman, Pope Clement VII. His clever wife, Maria Salviati, was

already established at Rome, intriguing with desperate energy to make a real prince of her little Cosimo, who was to be one day Grand Duke of Florence !

The astute Pope encouraged her ambition, caressed the boy, gave him a horse, a gorgeous saddle and harness ; purple taffetas and costly " tabby " to make rich dresses for the mother, and constant presents of money ; but not yet the estates she wanted for her husband, although he gave him large subsidies all that summer of 1524. Giovanni had now left the young Duke of Milan, that pasteboard prince, Francesco—the plaything of both parties, now placed in power, now turned out—as it happened to suit them.

The Medici condottiere was at San Secondo when the envoys of François reached him, and he wrote at once to Rome, on November 15, to find out what were the Pope's wishes. Four days after, he had received the permission of the crafty prelate, and entered the service of the French King. It so chanced that he had taken offence at his treatment by the Imperial generals, whose offers were not high enough, and whom he abused as ungrateful ; but Clement VII. was really responsible for his change of masters. The pay offered Giovanni by François I. was magnificent, reputed to be ten thousand crowns ; with a lavish salary for his Black Bands, the most splendid mercenaries of the period, trained and disciplined by their master and devoted to his person. The King also sent him the Order of St Michel.

But the proud soldier would have none of this. In his letter to his devoted friend the satirical Pietro

Aretino, he shows another side of his character. He writes : " Mon brave Pierre. . . . I have been treated as a brother, by King François ; . . . I have sent back to that great Prince, the Order of St Michel, and torn up the agreement which made provision for me and my bands and for my wife,[1] telling him that . . . in respect of my pay, he must proportion my reward to my merit. . . .

" I was forgetting to tell you that the King yesterday, most kindly complained that I had not brought you with me as is my custom. . . . I know that you will come, not alone for your own sake, but also to see me, for I cannot live without the Aretino.

" From Pavia.

" Giovanni dei Medici."

We have not space to do more than allude to this passionate friendship, perhaps the strangest in history. As for returning the Collar of St Michel, this Order imposed a vow which Giovanni could not take with honour, for he knew that to-morrow he might be fighting against the King who had bestowed it on him.

The King could not make enough of him, and placed Giovanni in his own camp, with his company as a special guard. It was his business to review the Swiss mercenaries when they arrived, and to keep his own men constantly occupied or they gave endless trouble. When the King moved from the Abbey of San-Lanfranco, on the west, to the Palace of Mirabello, it was

[1] He had good cause to regret this tearing up—after the battle of Pavia !

Medici's post to defend the Ticino and the west of the camp, when he was not engaged in driving back the sorties of Leyva from the city, in burning and pillaging the surrounding villages and skirmishing in the marshes. Whenever "Victory!" was cried by the besieged, everyone thought that he was taken.

Meantime the siege lingered on during those wintry months. The French camp was like a gay city where all the riches of France seemed to have found a new and brilliant scene of luxury and delight. The magnificent park of Mirabello was like an immense market with a pleasure fair constantly going on. Provisions were always arriving from the rich plains of Piedmont and from Asti, so that the army had everything in abundance. There were comfortable quarters in the rich abbeys, sumptuous tents with gold and silver plate for the princes and captains. There was all the excitement and glamour of war, enough to make life vivid and animated, while at night, when the fires lighted up all the plain, there was feasting and gambling and entertainment of very varied nature. The fair Clarice Visconti was borne in her litter to the camp of Pavia, that Bonnivet might prove to the King that he had not overstated her beauty.

Within the beleaguered city the scene was very different. Closely blockaded, it was so well guarded that no provisions could find entrance, and the suffering of the inhabitants was very great. Since the month of November they had never tasted beef or mutton, and the butchers were reduced to killing horses, mules, and asses, whose flesh was exposed on

their booths. In the piercing cold of an Italian winter, more severe than usual, there was no fuel for firing; and houses and even churches were demolished for the sake of the beams, the planks, and the panelling, which were used for fires. Money was very scarce for the payment of the landsknechte who constantly demanded their ducats; they were ready to endure hardships and to fight, but only on condition of being paid. The commander Leyva borrowed all that he could from the noble and merchants of the city, and set the example of generosity by sacrificing his splendid gold chain.

The vases and treasures of the churches were melted down as well as the silver torches of the University, and on one occasion a sum of 3000 ducats was brought to him from the Imperial camp. By a still bolder stratagem, Lannoy sent forty horsemen, each with a bag of gunpowder, who were fortunate enough by skirting the park to cross the woods and arrive in safety. This was extremely valuable help to Leyva, whose ammunition was almost exhausted, and who was now able to renew his daring sorties.

One night he had been successful against the Medici black bands, having taken some of their banners, which he hung up from the walls, "in contempt," and also killed some of the men. Giovanni delle Bande Nere was furious and swore to avenge them. His implacable temper never forgave an injury. One day, when in the presence of the King, there was a discussion about the way in which a certain out-post should be taken, Giovanni rose up abruptly and said: "Sacrée Majesté,

your Highness has more need of deeds than of advice." Without his cuirass, followed by a few of his men, he carried the post before the King, massacring everyone, reckless of danger, with a fiery impetuosity which nothing could resist. François I. at once made him a royal gift in the presence of the whole army.

This was the man whose soldiers had been killed. " I shall have no rest till I have avenged them," he cried. With his usual skill, he managed by a pretended flight to draw some men of Pavia into an ambuscade, upon which he fell upon them with fury and drove them back with terrible loss to the very gates of the city. He only lost a little page and his favourite captain, Annibale Testa, of Padua. Giovanni was returning to the camp, covered with blood, and full of the fierce joy of massacre, when he met Bonnivet who asked him whence came that air of triumph, and what success he had met with ? When he had heard the story, he said : " Let us go back, and show me the place of the fight." Flattered by this interest, Medici turned back at once ; he found the spot, pointed out the bodies, and even began to count them. But they had not noticed a deserted hut to which they had drawn near in speaking, where some of the enemies' arquebusiers were hiding, and as soon as they came within reach, Giovanni was struck by a shot. It pierced his ankle, just between the joints of the armour, in the opening between the greave and the solleret (plated shoe) and made a very serious and painful wound, for pieces of mail were driven into it. He was carried back into the camp ; the King came to see him and

GIOVANNI DEI MEDICI (DELLE BANDE NERE)
Bust by San Gallo

sent his best surgeon to dress the wound, and there was great consternation.

Giovanni had always detested this new form of warfare with fire-arms, which made the commonest soldier an equal of the greatest knight of chivalry. In this he was of the same opinion as Bayard; and both these famous warriors met their death from the kind of weapon which they despised. The Pope immediately sent a messenger to express his sorrow, and to request that Giovanni should be sent by water to Piacenza that he might be cared for there; he also sent a phial of precious oil, a remedy against tetanus, and the most famous surgeon of Bologna, Giacomo di Carpi, with directions how to use the oil.

The wounded man, very much against his wish, was taken by boat down the Po to Piacenza; he knew that his men would be quite unmanageable without him, and he told the King that he "wished to serve him in sickness or in health." His brother-in-law, Cardinal Salviati, waited several days before writing to his sister, Giovanni's wife. But when the wounded man showed signs of recovery, he told her about the accident which had befallen her husband and his recovery, adding that, with his reckless courage and the dangers he constantly defied, they should be thankful it was nothing worse. "If it had been his own son, the Most Christian King could not have shown more feeling, and he sends our Giovanni presents, visiting him and bestowing every sign of his affection." A safe-conduct and an escort had been given to him by the Viceroy, for so fiercely was he hated, that other-

wise he would have been torn to pieces by the people on the river side. A double file of soldiers protected both banks as the boat went down the Po from Pavia to Piacenza, on February 21, 1525.

At this time the brave defenders of Pavia were reduced to the last straights, although Leyva had been fortunate enough in one of his sorties to obtain provisions and even a few cattle. It happened in this way: François I. had in his service a large company of Swiss from the Grisons, who were encamped on the western side of the blockaded city. An adherent of the Emperor, the Castellan of Mosso, had taken by stratagem the fortress of Chiavenna, which was the key of the Grisons' valley on the Lake of Como. When this news reached the chiefs, before Pavia, they were terrified at the loss of so important a position, and without any scruple hastened to obey the summons of their fellow-countrymen. They had just received their pay, but no sense of honour towards the King of France, who had engaged them, prevented them from hastening back to the defence of their own country. No remonstrance or entreaty was of any avail, and they left the French when a battle was in prospect.

Antonio de Leyva made a sortie on purpose to attack them and harry their retreat, and was successful in carrying off a portion of their spoils to the starving city. But this could only be a temporary relief with so many mouths to feed, and the gallant commander was in such extremities, that he knew at any moment he might be compelled to surrender, when he at length

caught sight, from the battlements, of the Imperial banners, and hope revived.

Our most trustworthy and interesting account of all these incidents connected with the siege of Pavia, is to be found in the diary of a certain Francesco Tægius, who was at once a doctor and a knight.[1]

[1] "Francisci Tægius physici et equitis candida et vera narratio diræ ac cronicæ Papiæ obsidionis." M. Mignet was fortunate enough to find this rare volume in the Mazarine Library.

CHAPTER XIV

THE DUC DE BOURBON GOES TO SAVOY TO RAISE MONEY AND TO GERMANY TO ENGAGE FOOT-SOLDIERS—SIEGE AND GALLANT DEFENCE OF PAVIA—FRANCOIS I., CONTINUING TO FOLLOW BONNIVET'S ADVICE, LEAVES HIS ENTRENCHED POSITION—BATTLE OF PAVIA—GREAT IMPERIAL VICTORY, LARGELY DUE TO BOURBON—THE KING OF FRANCE TAKEN PRISONER—HIS CAPTIVITY AT PIZZIGHETONE—TERMS OF PEACE SUGGESTED BY CHARLES V. AND INDIGNANTLY REFUSED.

WE must now turn from the all-important siege and defence of Pavia to follow the story of the Imperial army in Italy during that eventful winter. While Bourbon, the master-spirit, was away collecting troops in Germany, Lannoy had at one time been so alarmed and depressed that he actually wrote to dissuade Charles V. from continuing a war of which he had to maintain the whole burden: "Take care what you are doing," he said; "you lose a crown in order to repair a ducal hat; it is a dear bargain." Only Pescara's influence prevented him from retreating to the kingdom of Naples and leaving Milan to its fate.

The calm persistence and resolution of the Emperor remained unshaken and he promised to send more men and money, but when a little later he heard of the secret alliance which the Pope, Venice and Florence, his ancient allies had made with the King of France,

his indignation was great. He complained bitterly of the ingratitude of Clement VII., whom he had raised to the Chair of St Peter, and declared that he would no longer oppose Luther in Germany. It is curious to find that Henry VIII., who was also irritated with the Pope, actually threatened to introduce into England the arch-heretic, by opposing whom he had received his title of "Defender of the Faith." It was not long, however, before the prospects of the Imperialists in Italy greatly improved. Charles de Bourbon returned bringing fresh hope and courage, with the landsknechte of Georg Frundsberg, of Marc Sith, and of the Archduke Ferdinand, having crossed the Alps in the dead of winter, and reaching the camp at Lodi before the end of the year. As he had failed to persuade Henry VIII. to take an opportune moment for invading the north of France, Bourbon was now ready to carry on a vigorous war on the banks of the Ticino. With his 12,000 Germans his army was now almost equal to that of François I., but was somewhat inferior in cavalry and artillery. Unfortunately large arrears of pay were owing to the soldiers, and some immediate action was absolutely necessary for keeping them together. The Duc de Bourbon and Pescara were quite decided that the army must be led at once towards Pavia, in order to engage in a battle with the French King, or to raise the siege of Pavia, if he should refuse to risk all upon one engagement. The latest news from the gallant Leyva left no doubt that the city was at the last extremity.

It was on January 24, 1525, that the Imperial army left the camp at Lodi, through the icy cold of a threatening snowstorm, and the heavy gloom of winter on that marshy plain of Lombardy. There were more than 20,000 foot-soldiers, and about 700 men-at-arms, but only a few pieces of cannon. The chief strength of this imposing host was in the well-trained Spanish arquebusiers which Pescara could handle so well, and in the serried masses of dauntless lands-knechte from Germany under their splendid leader, Frundsberg. Charles de Bourbon was in joint command with Lannoy, and on the way they delayed for a few days to take the town and fortress of Sant-Angelo, in order not to leave behind them a hostile garrison which might interfere with their supplies. In the numerous chariots which followed in the rear of the army, they had not only their tents, their baggage, and their ammuniton, but also their provisions. Leaving the banks of the Lambro they moved northwards as far as Marignano, in order to threaten Milan, but as the French troops made no movement in that direction, Bourbon gave orders to proceed southwards to Belgiojoso and to encamp on the east of the city.

François I. now took up his position in the Abbeys of San Paolo and others between the walls of Pavia and the enemy, whose movements had convinced him that they did not feel strong enough to attack him. So he gaily wrote to his mother on February 3, adding "that the relieving army by marching round, could not make Pavia hold out, as he knew that the besieged

had not tasted wine, meat or cheese for a month and had exhausted all their powder."

During three weeks the two armies remained so close to each other that the cries of the sentinels on each side, when they were changed, could be heard in the hostile camp. There were constant skirmishes between them, and one night Pescara, at the head of some Spanish arquebusiers, penetrated into the French lines, took one of the bastions, killed all who tried to defend it, and spiked the cannons. But matters were becoming desperate for the Imperial army, which demanded battle or pay, and there was always the chance of victory, if the French King could be induced to leave his fortified camp and give battle in the open. François held a council of war; the envoy of Clement VII. strongly advised him to play a waiting game, and this was the counsel of the most experienced French leaders. But Bonnivet gave his usual fatal advice, in a speech full of such flattery as François I. could never resist.

"You propose to our brave King to avoid a battle so greatly desired by us? We French have never refused it . . . above all when we have for our general a valiant King . . . Kings bear their fortune with them and victory is theirs, as with our little King Charles VIII. at the Taro, our King Louis XII. at Agnabello, and our King who is here, as at Marignano. And we cannot doubt that when he leads the way, his men-at-arms will follow and trample down this paltry enemy. . . . Therefore, Sire, Give battle."

The Imperial leaders met in council on February 23, and decided to attack that night, by entering the park of Mirabello by a breach of its walls in the north. February 24 was the Feast of St Matthias and the birthday of the Emperor Charles V. A message was sent to Antonio de Leyva to place his five thousand men under arms, and when he heard two cannon shots from his allies, to second their attack by making a sortie which would place the French between two fires. The soldiers were told to put on white shirts or pieces of white cloth outside their armour, that they might recognise each other on a dark February night. They were harangued by their leaders and told that there was no more food or wine to give them, but that they would find everything in abundance within the French camp. The landsknechte were urged to fight for the honour of the empire, and for the rescue of their five thousand fellow-countrymen shut up in Pavia.

Pioneers were sent on to make a breach in the walls of the park with sapping and mining tools, but they were so massive that a great part of the night had passed before there was room for the armed battalions to pass through, over the broken rubbish. The Marquess del Vasto was sent first, with fifteen hundred landsknechte and fifteen hundred arquebusiers, to advance towards the Castle of Mirabello, while the rest of the army was to follow on through the openings. By this time the day was breaking, and instead of a night surprise, they found the French already in battle array in the clear cold morning light.

" L'enemy . . . ayant grande dourance
D'estre rompuz sans donner coup de lance.
Dont au matin ilz feirent leur entrée
Dedans le parc, place bien esgalée.
Et nous aussi ja estions en bataille ;
Artillerie bonne avions sans faille. . ." [1]

Francois I., on receiving news of the enemy's approach and the battering down of the park wall, had left his entrenched camp, and placed his artillery in a commanding position to the right, under the Seneschal of Armagnac, the grand-master. Not far off, in compact masses, were placed in the forefront of battle, the famous Black Bands, who in the unfortunate absence of their leader Giovanni dei Medici, were led by François de Lorraine and Richard de la Poole, Duke of Suffolk. A little behind these were placed the serried companies of the Swiss foot-soldiers, while the bands of men-at-arms were on the wings of these infantry, spread out in the manner of fighting of those days. The Maréchal de Montmorency led the rear guard, composed of Italian soldiers and French adventurers. A strong force had been left behind to watch Pavia and oppose its garrison.

The vanguard had been confided to the experienced La Palisse, who had near him the Duke of Alençon, and it was here that the King took his place, in command of the main army. Surrounded by the great officers of the crown and the gentlemen of his household, he occupied a plain where there was room for several companies of artillery to spread out and fire their cannons. François I. awaited the battle

[1] From the King's " Epître." No. 25. " Captivité."

with perfect confidence and a light heart ; a gallant figure in his splendid armour, and his lance in hand, feeling that as a general, he had every reason to be satisfied with his arrangements.

The Marquess of Vasto and his landsknechte reached Mirabello palace without resistance, and found it almost deserted, but the grand master of artillery began a warm cannonade on the Spanish and German foot-soldiers as they crossed the breach in the wall. They were hampered by some pieces of artillery which they were dragging over the rough ground, and soon their ranks became disordered, and they retreated into a valley where the firing could not reach them, but they were hotly pursued by a body of French men-at-arms, and suffered severely. Things began to look bad for the Imperial side, for instead of surprising the enemy, they found themselves attacked and driven back. The Marquess of Vasto was recalled with his 3000 men, as there was now no use in occupying the palace, and the junction with the garrison of Pavia was no longer possible. They were forestalled by the French, and the only chance was to march forward and fight. Lannoy who was in the vanguard agreed to attack without much confidence ; he coldly made the sign of the cross and turning towards his men, said to them : " There is no hope but in God ; follow me and do as I do." Preceded by the Marquess of Civita-Sant'Angelo, who commanded the light cavalry, he moved on with all the vanguard.

Pescara threw the landsknechte against the Swiss in the French army, and sent his rapid arquebusiers

against the heavy men-at-arms. Meantime the French King was advancing, full of eager hope and courage, followed by all his army. He had left behind thirteen ensigns of men-at-arms with his companies of foot-soldiers, ordering them to march slowly until they met the enemy when they were to give the attack. (As the King tells the story in his poetical "epitre") :—

> " . . . Treize enseignes de gens d'armes, de faict
> Feys demourer ferme pour bon effect ;
> Nos Allemans avec eulx je laisse,
> Leur commandant qu'ilz marchassent sans cesse
> Au petit pas, affin que leur desir
> Fust bien conduict à temps et à loysir. . ." [1]

At the head of his nobles, the King rushed forward against the Imperial van-guard, and nothing could resist the impetus of those heavily-armed cavaliers. The King himself struck down and killed with his lance the Marquess of Civita-San'Angelo, whose light cavalry was dispersed, while the men-at-arms of Lannoy were driven back and a troop of arquebusiers and pikemen were broken up. When François I. saw them in flight he thought the battle was won and cried out to M. de Lescun in triumph : "Now indeed can I call myself Duke of Milan !"

So far the victory appeared to be on the side of the French, but the enemy, though driven back with the first shock, was by no means discouraged. Bourbon, ardent and indomitable, led forward the main body of the army, the landsknechte, who marched steadily onward without being checked this time by the artillery, which was partly masked by the Black

[1] "Epître du Roi." No. 25. "Captivité."

Bands, whose forward movement in fact paralysed the firing on their own side. These splendidly trained men of Giovanni dei Medici, formed the right wing of the French army, led by the Duke of Suffolk and François de Lorraine, who both fell beneath the impetuous, overwhelming rush of Bourbon's landsknechte, while their companies, after an heroic resistance, were almost annihilated. The main army, under the King himself, met with much the same fate from the skilful and well-aimed attack of the Spanish arquebusiers, which was most fatal to the heavily-armoured knights on their massive horses, upon whom shots rained from every side. The unfortunate gentlemen-at-arms were pierced through the joints of their armour, unhorsed, and cast like helpless steel-encased logs upon the ground, by foes so active that they could neither be attacked nor repelled. We cannot wonder that their ranks were soon in disorder, and that they fell back upon the Swiss companies behind, the mainstay of the French army.

These famous mercenaries, competed for by every European sovereign, were destined to lose at Pavia the high reputation which they had risked more than once in these Italian campaigns. Already shaken by the retreat of the men-at-arms into their midst, harassed by the firing of the arquebusiers in pursuit, —attacked in front by Pescara and Vasto leading the Imperial cavalry, and on the right flank by Bourbon and the landsknechte fiercely triumphant from their destruction of the black bands—the serried battalions of the Swiss gave way after one desperate effort, felt

as one man with a thrill of panic that resistance was hopeless, and turned to flight.

Can we blame them, these rough soldiers, who cared for neither side, whose profession it was to sell their fighting power for money, who were willing to risk their lives in the usual way, but for whom a wholesale butchery would be pure waste. "La guerre devant durer toute la vie, on la menait doucement."

The King of France was still gallantly fighting in the midst of a "mêlée"; his lance was broken but he was making good use of his great sword; he was convinced that he had won the battle, and was enjoying the proudest moment of his life, when he became aware that the Swiss were retreating in disorder. "Mon Dieu! qu'est ce?" he cried in sudden dismay, and rode towards the fugitives. But they would not listen to the commands and entreaties of their leaders, Jean de Diesbach and the Seigneur de Fleurange, and François I. placed himself at the head of a troop of men-at-arms, whom he rallied and led back for a last desperate charge upon the Imperial cavalry. Amidst the confusion and fighting which followed, Antonio de Leyva came out of Pavia with his 5000 foot-soldiers, his lances, and his light cavalry. He overcame the troops left to watch him, and dashed upon the fugitives who were now between the garrison and the victorious army.

The struggle continued for some time with merciless brutality, and the greatest nobles, the most gallant knights of France, were mown down by the relentless scythe of death. Amongst the famous names in that roll-call of honour, were—La Palisse, first Maréchal of

France, the veteran La Trémouille, the Comte de St Pôl, the incomparable Galeazzo Sanseverino Grand Ecuyer to the King, who fell in his service, with many another prince and noble lord. The Maréchal de Saint Foix fell almost at his feet. But the King himself seemed to bear a charmed life. Although wounded in the face and hand, he still fought on until his horse was killed under him and he fell to the ground. A conspicuous figure in his shining armour covered with fleurs-de-lis, his surcoat of cloth of silver, and the great feather on his helmet, he was recognised at once and surrounded by Spaniards and Germans, who pressed him to surrender, but he refused. He was in serious danger of his life when Lannoy, the Viceroy, arrived in haste, sprang from his horse, rescued the King from his perilous position, and with grave courtesy received him as prisoner to the Emperor. There were great cries of "Victoria! Victoria! España!" His surcoat had been torn in pieces which were fought for as relics. François I. thus tells the story himself.

"Et la je fuz longuement combatu,
Et mon cheval mort soubz moy abatu.
. . . . . .
De toutes pars lors despouillé je fus
Mays deffendre n' servit ne reffuz.
. . . . . .
Bien me trouva en ce piteux arroy
Executant leur chef le viceroy,
Que quand me veit, il descendit sans faille
Affin qu'ayde en ce besoing ne faille.
Las! que diray? cela ne veulz nyer,
Vaincu je fuz et rendu prisonnier.
Parmy le camp en tous lieux fuz mené,
Pour me monstrer çà et là pourmené. . . ."[1]

[1] "Epître de François I." No. 25. "Captivité."

The King asked that he might not be taken into Pavia where he feared that he might be ill received, so he was conducted to the Monastery of St Paul, in the middle of the camp, and there his wounds were dressed. We are told that Bourbon served him at table with every mark of respect, and was well received, and that they even talked about the battle! He is also said to have received Pescara with great cordiality. François I. always prided himself upon his gift of winning friends.

After a short time, he was removed under a strong guard to the citadel of Pizzighetone, a strongly fortified place on the river Adda, near Cremona, in the care of Captain d'Alarçon. It was from here that he wrote the famous letter to his mother:—

"Madame, pour vous faire savoir comme se porte le reste de mon infortune, de toutes choses ne m'est demeuré que l'honneur et la vie qui est saulve. . . ." [1] He asked her to give a safe-conduct through France for a messenger he was sending to the Emperor, "to ask how he was to be treated." The letter he wrote is a model of tact and elegance.[2] He asks to be treated with honour and magnanimity, that the Emperor, "instead of acquiring a useless prisoner, may render a king for ever his slave." [3]

Never was there a more sudden downfall than that of the triumphant French before Pavia. In less than

[1] No. 42 in "Captivité."

[2] These letters of François I., and many others written by various great people at this time and for long after, are collected in "La Captivité du Roi, François I.," by M. Aimé Champallion Figeac.

[3] No. 43, "Captivité."

two hours a splendid army had been utterly defeated and almost destroyed. More than 10,000 men were left upon the field of battle, or had been drowned in seeking to escape, for Leyva, on his final sortie from Pavia, had caused the bridge over the Ticino to be destroyed. Besides the nobles already mentioned who lost their lives on that fatal day, were many other famous leaders, and the Admiral Bonnivet who, when he knew that the army was destroyed and the King was taken prisoner, would not survive a disaster of which he was in a great measure the cause. Many noble captains were taken prisoners, and amongst them, the King of Navarre, the Duc de Nemours, d'Aubigny, Montmorency, the Vidame of Chartres, the Seigneur de Fleurange, the Seneschal of Armagnac, and a host of others, who were not suffered to be ransomed at once, but were held securely in prison. Only one man of note saved his life by a disgraceful flight, the Duc d'Alençon, husband of Marguerite of France, the King's sister. He never recovered from the shame and disgrace which are said to have caused his death two months later. Some hundreds of men-at-arms and several thousand of the Swiss foot-soldiers managed to cross the park and fled with him, passing in disorder through Milan where they spread consternation with the terrible news. Trivulzio, who was in charge of the defence of the city, felt that all was lost and retreated with his soldiers over the Alps.

The honours of the victory remained to a great extent with Bourbon, whose splendid promptitude in going so far afield to raise money and fighting men,

with his dauntless courage and skill in attack, probably won the battle of Pavia. His Spanish soldiers sang his praise in a camp ballad whose refrain went :—

" Calla, calla, Julio Cesar, Anibal y Scipion.
Viva la fama di Borbon ! "

Pescara, who was always jealous of him, wrote to Charles V. on the very night of the battle in the highest terms of admiration, and Sir John Russell sent the same account to Henry. Some Flemish soldier in the Emperor's service wrote another stirring battle song :—

" Le Seigneur de Bourbon
La bataille donna ;
Ce fut un vendredy
Le jour de St Matthias.
Dedans il se fourra,
Criant : ' Vive Bourgoingne ! '
Avant, avant, effans,
Il nous faut cy monstrer
La forche de Bourgoingne. . ."

The Duke's position had immensely improved after the battle of Pavia. Sismondi says that there were many people in France who were ripe for rebellion and who were ready to rally round Charles de Bourbon, the first prince of the blood. (Alençon did not count now.) About 1800 horsemen had passed through Vitry, pillaging the country, and crying : " Vive Bourbon ! " An attack on France at this time might well have met with response from within, but neither Charles V. nor Henry VIII. seized the opportunity.

The news of the victory was sent to Charles V. by Lannoy, and the messenger Peñalosa, who went by safe-conduct through France, as we have seen, arrived on March 14 at Madrid. He found the Emperor

anxious about his army, and when told the good news, he remained silent and pale at first and then exclaimed : " The King of France is in my power ! I have won the battle ! " Then he went alone into his room and remained long in prayer. When he was asked to celebrate his victory by public rejoicings, he refused, and ordered a simple procession next day which he followed on foot, in a cape of black frieze, as far as the Chapel of Notre-Dâme d'Atocha, where he heard a solemn mass. The preacher had taken for his text : " Laudamini nomen Dei vestri, qui fecit nobiscum mirabilia," but he was forbidden by Charles V. to give him any glory over his enemies. Never was there seen a more wonderful instance of moderation and self-control than in the behaviour of this young conqueror of five-and-twenty. It remained to be seen what use he would make of his victory.

As for Charles de Bourbon, he had seen his foes humbled before him, but he had not yet reclaimed his dominions and his beautiful palaces from the grasping hands of Louise the Queen-mother, now Regent of France. If only he could carry out his earliest plans of attack, and induce Henry VIII. to invade France in her present condition, without King, or generals, or an army worthy of the name, conquest was certain and he could not fail to regain all that he had lost. After the success at Pavia, Wolsey and the King of England were willing to listen to him, but now it was the Emperor who had no wish to see Henry VIII. more powerful than he was at present, and who could not forgive his negotiations with the Regent of France. He agreed

with his minister, Gattinara, that "it did not accord with his honour to make war on a King who was his prisoner and could not defend himself, and from whom he might obtain satisfaction without having recourse to arms."

He sent a messenger (Beaurain) to Bourbon with a memoir he was to show François I., as suggested conditions of peace. It begins: "Instructions . . . to the very high, excellent and powerful prince, our dear and well-beloved good brother, cousin, and Lieutenant-General in Italy, Duc du Bourbonnais et d'Auvergne. . . ."[1] The conditions were certainly hard, but then Charles had everything in his power. The one claim with regard to which he never wavered was that the duchy of Burgundy, wrested by force from his grandmother, Marie of Burgundy, on the death of her father, Duke Charles, should be restored to him, the rightful owner. French historians have loaded the Emperor with abuse for this "exorbitant demand," not bearing in mind that from his earliest youth he had been brought up in the ancestral faith that the possessions of Charles of Burgundy were his by Divine right. If the disaster before the walls of Nancy had been the cause of such cruel loss to his House, surely the victory of Pavia should give back to him those hereditary lands and cities which were dearer to his heart than all the wealth of Spain and the Indies.

Charles also demanded all that had been once ceded by the treaties of Conflans and of Péronne; the French King was to give up his claims in Italy, to restore to the

[1] Captivité de François I., p. 149-159. (No. 59.)

Duc de Bourbon everything that he had been deprived of, with Provence which he claimed through Anne de France as heir of King Réné. All his adherents were to be forgiven, and Philibert de Châlon Prince of Orange, another rebel, was to receive back his domains. When François I. had agreed to this, he would be set free, and might have the satisfaction of joining the Emperor in a crusade against heresy—and the Turks.

The King of France indignantly refused to give up Burgundy and his possessions in Flanders, etc., and wrote many of his charming letters, full of the most beautiful sentiments; "he had chosen honest prison rather than shameful flight . . . he would endure anything, esteeming himself happy if, for the freedom of his country, he should remain all his life in prison . . . etc." Curiously enough, he makes no difficulty about the concessions to the rebellious Bourbon, as we read in his reply to the Emperor in the following questions and answers.

"That M. de Bourbon and his accomplices . . . may regain their confiscated goods?" "Facille." (Easily granted.)

"That the lawsuit of Madame shall remain in abeyance during the life of the said Bourbon?" "Facille."

"That Bourbon may have permission to sue for the County of Provence against the King?" "Facille."

"That Bourbon may remain exempt from service and personal duties during his life, and that he may remain in the service of the Emperor."

"Facille, mais qu'on ne le voye jamais." And the

King added that "he would return to the Duc de Bourbon his position, pension, and offices as he had them before, and would give him in marriage a daughter of the King of France, with the usual dowry . . . and M. de Bourbon would be his Lieutenant-General with any troops sent for the service of the Emperor." [1] (April, 1525.)

A letter from Louise de Savoie to her son of this time shows that Bourbon, thinking that all would be well for him, was full of kindness and attentions for the King. "Monseigneur, I have seen by the letter which you were pleased to write me, the service which Mgr. de Bourbon offers you, of which I am very glad, and I could have no greater pleasure than to see him do his duty towards you. . . ." [2]

How far the Queen-mother was sincere we cannot tell, but at this critical moment for France she showed great energy and resource, and was well seconded by the patriotic feeling of her advisers. She was willing to pay any sum for the ransom of the King, but refused to yield a foot of territory. She was even willing apparently to agree to Bourbon's claims, up to a certain point, but when he demanded that his dominions should be independent of the King, this was positively rejected. Notwithstanding all his heroic language, poor François would have done much for his freedom, as the confinement of his prison life was naturally exceedingly trying to one so devoted to out-door sports, although we hear of his playing "le jeu de

[1] No. 69, "Captivité."
[2] No. 81, "Captivité."

paume," with other alleviations. But the Regent remained firm, while constantly writing the most affectionate and sympathetic letters to her son, her "César." Several projects of escape were made, and on May 18, the King was taken by Lannoy and a strong escort from Pizzighetone to the well-fortified citadel of Genoa. The Royal captive was extremely anxious to have a personal interview with Charles V., as he had the fullest confidence in his powers of persuasion. He induced Lannoy, on his sole responsibility, to convey him to Spain, to the extreme indignation of Bourbon, who wrote a very indignant letter to the Emperor from Milan, which happened to be intercepted on the way and taken to the Regent, Louise.

Neither Pescara nor Bourbon would have connived at the King's removal to Spain, which they looked upon as likely to prolong his captivity, and so delay the peace of Europe.

CHAPTER XV

FRANÇOIS I. TAKEN TO SPAIN—HE IS IMPRISONED IN THE CASTLE OF BENISANO, IN THE MOUNTAINS OF THE MOORS—THE KING IS TRANSFERRED TO MADRID—DEATH OF CLAUDE, QUEEN OF FRANCE—DISCUSSIONS OF THE TREATY OF PEACE—THE MARQUESS OF PESCARA IS URGED TO BETRAY THE EMPEROR—MARGUERITE OF ALENÇON, THE KING'S SISTER, COMES TO MADRID—HER VAIN EFFORTS—ILLNESS OF FRANÇOIS I.—HE AGREES TO ALL THE TERMS OFFERED WITH THE FULL INTENTION OF BREAKING HIS WORD—TREATY OF MADRID—THE KING REGAINS HIS FREEDOM.

WITH regard to the imprisonment of the King of France, the Emperor's intention had evidently been to insure his safety, if necessary, by removing him prisoner to Naples. We learn this from a letter written by Charles to Bourbon and Lannoy on March 27, 1525. Pizzighetone was an almost impregnable fortress, but even there some schemes of escape had been proposed. The Viceroy of Naples appears to have altered this plan without consulting any one, and when he left Genoa with his royal prisoner, in the Spanish fleet, he was supposed to be on his way to Naples. The ships had to put in at Porto-Fino, where they were detained by bad weather. Meantime François I. had contrived to let his mother, Louise, know that his escort was not very strong, and that a fleet of French galleys might be able to intercept his convoy. But

when Lannoy consented to take him to Spain, the King thought it wiser not to run this risk.

François I. arrived at Barcelona on June 19, and was received there with great honour. From thence he was taken to Valencia, where he met his relation Germaine de Foix,and soon reached his destination in the Castle of Benisano in the mountains of the Moors. Here he was allowed to go hunting in company with the Captain Alarçon and his guards, but he was troubled and anxious at receiving no message from the Emperor, who, in fact, had been much surprised at his coming to Spain. Lannoy meantime had hastened to the Court at Toledo that he might explain his action, and also induce Charles V. to meet his prisoner. A messenger also arrived from the French King, begging for a safe-conduct for his sister, Marguerite, the Duchesse d'Alençon, who proposed to come to Spain and help in the negotiations. This last, the Emperor granted, adding however, that it was useless for her to come unless she had power to give up the duchy of Burgundy.

With this hope before him, the Emperor at length decided that François I. should be brought to the Castle of Madrid, which would be within easy reach of Toledo. The King was much cheered on hearing this, and his journey through Spain, which lasted three weeks was like a triumphal progress with princely entertainments, tournaments, and bull-fights on the way. He reached Madrid on August 17, and was conducted to a tower in the Alcazar, as soon as it had been made ready for him. The chamber in which

A. Givaudon, photo.

ELÉONORE OF AUSTRIA, SISTER OF CHARLES V
Musée Condi, Chantilly

he was destined to remain so long, had one large window with strong iron bars, was about a hundred feet from the ground, and looked towards the south, with a view of the river Manzanares below, whose bed was almost dry at this season, and over the vast arid plateau beyond. It was an unhealthy climate for the hot autumn months, and in the closer confinement, François I. had leisure to regret that his desire had been granted. The hoped-for interview with the Emperor was still delayed, but the French ambassadors sent by the Regent, had already arrived at Toledo. Their instructions were not to give up any territory, but to offer a ransom, and to suggest a double marriage—of the King with Eléonore, sister of Charles V.—and of the Dauphin with little Doña Maria, daughter of the widowed Queen of Portugal, whose only son, Carlos, had died in infancy.

This was rendered possible by the death of the gentle, neglected Queen Claude, who, after doing all that was required of her by giving birth to three sons and two daughters, had quietly passed away from a world where she was not wanted, during the absence of her husband, François I. in Italy, in 1524. Poor little Claude was honoured by a magnificent funeral, while her faithless husband was writing poetical love-letters to his last mistress, Melle de Pisseleu (afterwards Duchesse d'Etampes), who had been carefully chosen for him by his mother.

There were endless diplomatic discussions at Toledo, chiefly with regard to the Duchy of Burgundy, in which neither side would yield. In vain the Emperor

declared that "he only asked for what was his," and the Chancellor Gattinara pointed out that his master was a pattern of generosity not to claim all the kingdom of France, which had been given by Pope Boniface VIII. to the Emperor Albert, one of his ancestors. He might well have demanded Dauphiné and all the territory on the left bank of the Rhone which had once formed part of the empire, and the counties of Toulouse and Languedoc, which the Kings of France had taken from the House of Aragon, of which Charles V. was the heir. In his moderation, he only asked for the possessions of the House of Burgundy, unjustly seized by Louis XI. . . . his ancient heritage, the foundation of his order, and of which he bore the name and arms" . . . the counties, towns, lands, and lordships granted to the Dukes Philippe le Bon, and Charles le Téméraire by the treaties of Arras in 1435, of Conflans in 1465, and of Péronne in 1468. . . ." All this, of course, was fully answered by the other side.

Then we have a very full memoir sent by the Duc de Bourbon of all his claims; in which he lays special stress upon the pardon and restoration in their goods of all his friends and adherents, mentioning them all by name. "Reparation" of his honour and that of his followers he demands before all things. In a letter which he wrote to Henry VIII. from Milan on July 6, he mentions that the Emperor desires his immediate presence at Toledo, that he may defend his interests. But he had to wait for the return of the galleys which had taken the King of France to Spain.

Meantime the Regent Louise was secretly using every effort to draw away Henry VIII. from his alliance with Charles V., and to overthrow his dominion in Italy. She had no scruples in her perfidy. She tried to win over the young Francesco Sforza, nominal Duke of Milan, offering him a princess of France as his bride, if he would join the League against the Emperor, into which the Pope was only too ready to enter. It was Clement VII. who conceived the idea of bribing Ferrando d'Avalos, Marquess of Pescara from his allegiance. He sent the subtle Morone to sound this ambitious young prince, an Italian by birth, if a Spaniard in blood, who had felt himself neglected by the Emperor after his splendid services at Pavia. Indeed his pride had been so wounded by the high-handed conduct of Lannoy in carrying off the King, his prisoner, to Spain, that it was thought he would readily join the plot against the Emperor. Morone craftily dwelt upon the wrongs of Pescara, and then, exacting a promise of secrecy, revealed the whole conspiracy, at the same time almost offering the crown of Naples to him. It has always been one of the unsettled questions of History, how far the brave general wavered in his allegiance, but some rumour must have reached his wife, the devout Vittoria Colonna, for she wrote him a most touching and earnest letter, begging :

" . . . . that you consider well what you are doing, mindful of your pristine fame and estimation ; and in truth for my part, I care not to be the wife of a king, but rather to be joined to a faithful and loyal

man ; for it is not riches, titles and kingdoms which can give true glory, infinite praise and perpetual renown to noble spirits desirous of eternal fame ; but faith, sincerity and other virtues of the soul ; and with these man may rise higher than the highest kings, not only in war but in peace." [1]

In the end, when he had learnt everything, Pescara betrayed the whole plot to Charles V., as we see in his letters of August 12 and 20, and of September 8.[2] He owns that he is ashamed of his want of faith to Morone, but pleads that for the Emperor's service, it was an absolute necessity. He strongly advises that peace at any price, should be made with the French King. The danger was most pressing, for all Italy seemed against him, and Pescara took the most strenuous steps ; fortified Alessandria and Vercelli, concentrated the Spanish troops, arrested the Chancellor Morone and besieged Francesco Sforza in the citadel of Milan.

Meanwhile Marguerite of Alençon had arrived in Spain, full of the greatest anxiety about the news of her brother the King's serious illness. Scarcely resting for food or sleep, she crossed the great plains of Castile in her litter, in less than a fortnight. In " plain black velvet without jewel or ornament, a long white veil falling over her shoulders," she was met at the Alcazar Gate of Madrid by the Emperor, and then conducted by him to the bedside of her brother. This was on September 20, and the day after the first

[1] " Ladies of the Italian Renaissance," Christopher Hare, p. 287.
[2] Archives of Vienna.

meeting between François I. and Charles V., who was very much alarmed at the condition of his prisoner. However the arrival of Marguerite had a wonderful effect upon his health and spirits, although for several days, his life was almost despaired of.

It was nearly a fortnight later when his sister felt able to leave him and begin the great negotiation from which so much was expected. When she arrived at Toledo, the Emperor met her, with various great lords, in the picturesque Moorish square, the Zocodover, as the Duchess rode forward followed by her ladies on horseback. He appears to have treated her with the greatest courtesy during their conferences, but her grace and charm had no influence whatever on his terms. Marguerite proposed that the King should marry Eléonore, the widowed Queen of Portugal, sister of Charles V., who had already been promised to Bourbon, as he reminded her. They discussed the subject of the contested Duchy of Burgundy with no result, as neither side would yield on this or any other subject. The restitution of the Bourbon estates had already been agreed to, but there were many points in question which they fought over in vain, as we learn from Marguerite's constant letters to her brother at Madrid. At last her patience gave way, and she seems to have joined in a plot for the escape of François I. disguised as a negro page, while relays of horses were to be in readiness at various places, all the way to the frontier. This was discovered and did not improve the King's position.

But the question of his marriage with Madame

Eléonore had already been seriously considered, and it was Lannoy in his jealousy of Bourbon, who schemed that the lady should be asked whether she would rather be Queen of France or the wife of a fugitive. She replied without hesitation that she preferred François I.

Charles V. had already sent to summon Bourbon to Spain in order that he might be consulted in the affairs which concerned him. He waited for the galleys which had taken over the King to Barcelona, and reached Toledo on November 15, after being entertained with the greatest honour on the journey. The Emperor gave him a splendid reception, coming to meet the Duke with all his court, in the midst of a heavy rain. He had already been met on the bridge of Alcantara by a great company of nobles, and a procession had been formed to do him honour, with more than a hundred chariots covered with draperies worked in fleurs-de-lys, and with the arms of the Duc de Bourbon on a shield—three golden fleurs-de-lys on an azure field, etc., and his ducal crown on each. He is described by an eye-witness as "a very handsome figure and of fine carriage; his grave face most noble and princely, with a thick black beard; he was clad in a surcoat of black velvet lined with cloth of silver and trimmed with knots and also many puffs of this cloth of silver showing through the slashing. On his head he wore a gilt coif under his hat of black silk; his horse was a splendid bay, with steel harness and black velvet housings."

When Bourbon drew near the Emperor he dismounted, His Majesty spurred on his mule to stop his doing so, but the Duke had reached the ground. Then the Emperor slipped from his mule and embraced Bourbon, remaining thus for some time, and saying that he was worthy of all honour. Then he caused him to remount and made him ride by his side in the usual place of the Duke of Calabria, and thus they rode to the palace, the Emperor giving him great honour and praise for his brave deeds, and solemnly promising that his dukedom and all his possessions should be restored to him. This great favour made Lannoy more full of jealousy and hatred than ever, and the Emperor had great difficulty in keeping the peace between these two brave men who had both served him so well. It was probably the strong influence of Lannoy which, more than anything else, induced Charles V. to break his promise to Bourbon and offer his sister Eléonore in marriage to François I. In fact, after all these endless discussions, he would almost have agreed to anything—except giving up the demand for the Duchy of Bourgogne, "his hereditary dominion"! But he was much troubled on Bourbon's account, and pointed out to him with the utmost kindness and consideration, that if his estates were to be restored, the King must be conciliated in every way. He also promised Bourbon the Duchy of Milan to make up to him for this costly sacrifice of his promised bride. But the Duke was bitterly disappointed and told the Emperor that he had held the prospect of an alliance with His

Majesty, of far greater value than any possessions on earth.[1] It is interesting to note that Gattinara, the devoted Chancellor of Charles V., held that nothing could justify his master in breaking his promise to Bourbon.[2]

Sismondi, Sandoval and other historians assert that Charles de Bourbon had in former days been one of the admirers of Marguerite, and that now, meeting her again as a widow from the recent death of the Duc d'Alençon, his love for her revived, and serious hopes of obtaining her hand were given to him both by Charles V. and by François I. But of this we have no proof whatever, as in all the numerous letters of the Duchesse d'Alençon, no allusion is ever made to it. This romance long continued a favourite legend, and it is quite possible that there was some foundation for it. Varsillas asserts that Bourbon "ne se mettait plus en peine de la reine Eléonore depuis qu'il avoit revu la duchesse d'Alençon."

The long conferences between the Emperor and the Duchess had made no advance towards an agreement; and the duel between these well-matched foes was only ended by Marguerite's departure for France. The King was in despair and a strange idea occurred to the "Most Christian" monarch. He had listened with apparent sympathy to the Emperor's passionate desire to fight against the infidel and defend Europe, but now François I. actually wrote to the young Sultan Solyman

[1] Letter of B. Castiglione, December 9.

[2] Despatch of Dr Lee to Henry VIII., January 26. State Papers, vol. vi. p. 521.

suggesting that he should help his cause by attacking the King of Hungary (Louis who had married Marie, the sister of Charles V.). The answer returned by the Eastern potentate is a model of magnificent assumption.

" I, who am the Sultan of Sultans, the Sovereign of sovereigns, the distributor of crowns to the monarchs of the surface of the globe, the shadow of God upon the earth, the Sultan and Padishah of . . . (twenty names) and other countries which my noble ancestors (may God brighten their tombs) conquered, and which my august majesty has likewise conquered with my flaming sword . . . you who are Francis King of France, you have sent a letter to my Porte, refuge of sovereigns. . . ." [1]

It is quite possible that this most unwise appeal of the French King may have hastened the coming disaster on the plain of Mohâcs, where the young King of Hungary lost his life and his army. But, as we shall see, neither François nor his mother shrank from any treachery or deliberate lying to attain their ends. While Louise was doing all in her power to stir up rebellion and opposition in Italy to the Emperor, she wrote him the most affectionate letters, asserting that she had refused to listen to his enemies, calling him her " beloved son," and praying that he will address her as " mother " ; Charles was not taken in, and replied with a cold " Madame." [2] All else having failed, the supreme act of deception was arranged between the

[1] " Marguerite of Austria," Christopher Hare, p. 293.

[2] Mignet actually complains of this, as ingratitude on the part of Charles V.

Regent and her son. Louise sent Chabot de Brion with her final instructions to the ambassadors at Toledo. As François' pretence of abdication had made no impression upon the Emperor, the plan now was to agree to every demand, to sign anything required, and to obtain the King's freedom at any price. By a thorough change of policy, François now urged the ambassadors to yield all that he once refused. They were not only to give up all claim to Italy, Aragon, Catalonia, and Roussillon, to abandon the suzerainty of Flanders and Artois, to yield Tournay, Mortagne, and both the city and county of Arras, but they were even to restore the Duchy of Bourgogne and its dependencies to the Empire. Bourbon was to have all that he had asked for, and also his friends. He not only permitted but commanded all this, freeing his agents from all responsibility.

The Emperor was surprised and touched by this complete surrender ; he showed the greatest kindness to his prisoner, and offered to give as a dowry to his sister Eléonore, the counties of Macon and Auxerre, as well as the lordship of Bar-sur-Seine. Against the insistent advice of his Chancellor Gattinara, he even consented to set the King free *before* the Duchy of Burgundy was given up, although he required the two elder sons of the King as hostages. The treaty was solemnly ratified on January 14. An altar was raised in the King's chamber, the Archbishop of Embrun said Mass, the treaty was read and François I. swore upon the Holy Gospels to execute it faithfully ; he then signed it, as did the Archbishop de Selve and Chabot

de Brion; after which the Emperor also signed, followed by Lannoy, Moncada, and the secretary L'Allemand. Then Lannoy called upon François to take his knightly oath; this he did bare-headed, with his hand in that of the Viceroy, pronouncing the following words: "I, François, King of France give my word to the Emperor Charles. . . . that six weeks after I am set at liberty . . . I will restore to him Burgundy and all the places mentioned in this treaty of peace . . . and that if all is not delivered within four months, I will return within the power of the Emperor as his prisoner of war. . . ."

While this was all sworn in the most solemn and binding manner, the King had already decided to keep none of his promises. We can hardly believe that, the day before, he had called his ambassadors and declared, after receiving a vow of secrecy, that he had no intention of keeping the treaty, and only submitted to necessity! Such was the truth and honour of a king!

François still remained a prisoner at the Alcazar, but he was allowed to attend mass in the different churches, and to visit convents where the nuns gave him collations. He was also allowed to ride in great state, although well guarded by Alarçon and his men, as far as the bridge of Toledo on the Monday to meet the Emperor. They advanced towards each other, cap in hand, and embraced as if they were the dearest friends, and then rode back to Madrid. For the next few days they were always seen together, and as François I. desired to see his future bride, we are told that Bourbon had the honour of bringing her into the city of Toledo, with all appearance of friendship.

On February 16, the two monarchs rode together to Illescas, halfway between Toledo and Madrid, where Eléonore had already arrived ; the meeting passed off well with the usual stately courtesies and entertainments. After a few days spent in the greatest intimacy, the Emperor parted from the King of France at Torrejon ; he was going to Seville for his marriage with Isabel of Portugal, while François I. was returning to Madrid on his way to France and freedom. At the last moment, Charles drew the King aside and asked him if he would remember his promises ? Again and again François repeated his assurances. " . . . I swear to you that I will keep all that I have promised, as soon as I reach my kingdom ; " were the last words upon his lips before the two princes parted for ever, commending each other to God's care.

The greatest precautions were taken in the journey of the French King to the frontier, where he was to be exchanged for his two sons in the midst of the river Bidassoa. " Then the 18th day of March, the King accompanied by the Viceroy, Captain d'Alarçon and fifty horse, came to the shore of the river that divideth the realm of France from the kingdom of Spaine, at the same time M. de Lautrec with the King's children and the like number of horse presenting themselves on the other side." [1] The actual exchange appears to have made in a barque placed in the middle of the river, and as soon as the Dauphin aged eight, and his younger brother, had been given into the care of the Spanish noble . . . " the French King leaped out of

[1] Old translation of Guicciardini, pub. 1618.

the barque into his boat and being brought to the shore, mounted suddenly upon a Turkish horse of a wonderful swiftness . . . and runne without stay to St Jean de Luz, a town of his obedience four leagues from thence ; and being there readily relieved with a fresh horse, he ranne with the same swiftness to Bayon, where he was received with incredible joy of all the Court." [1] Here he was awaited by Louise with a company of lords and ladies who brought Mademoiselle Heilly in attendance, and he had a gay time. The present was ever enough for his light temperament, and he could always forget the most important affairs of State to give up his whole soul to the pleasure of the moment. Ruled only by his own wishes, hedged in by the supreme self-conceit which assured him that " as King he could do no wrong," and was raised to a sphere above the common laws of honour and morality. François I. had no scruple whatever with regard to the deliberate, double-dyed treachery which he was about to proclaim to the world.

Meantime, the Emperor, after his affectionate parting from the King of France, had continued his journey to Seville where the most splendid festivities were prepared for his marriage with his beautiful young cousin, Isabel of Portugal. This alliance had long been desired by his subjects, and it was welcomed with the greatest enthusiasm. Perhaps this was the happiest moment of the young monarch's life, which, from his childhood, had been one unbroken succession of solemn duties. He was warmly attached to his bride, he was more beloved than ever by his people :

he had made peace with the King of France and, as he believed, secured the return of those lost provinces—the desire of his heart. Now he would have leisure to go into Germany and there oppose at once the progress of heresy and the aggressions of the Turks. He sent the Duke of Brunswick with instructions to the Prince Bishop of Strasburg; he wrote to his brother Ferdinand on March 26, casually mentioning his marriage, "which pleases me well," arranging about the coming Diet of Spires where his brother was to preside, and expressing his earnest hope to set forth "à la St-Jean," June 24, towards his German dominions.

But this was not to be. Long before Midsummer came the dread catastrophe which was probably expected by all but himself. His royal prisoner, once set free, had first delayed, and then positively refused to keep his solemn promises, and had deliberately torn up the Treaty of Madrid. It was a crushing blow to Charles V., who was at once disappointed in his dearest hopes and checked in his great projects. He was even more deeply wounded in his pride than in his position, which was serious enough. All his plans were overthrown. Instead of crossing the Alps in triumph to receive the iron crown of Lombardy, a terrible contest was before him. The Italian League, whose formation had been checked by the revelations of Pescara, had been renewed after his death on November 30, 1526, which had been a most serious loss to the Imperial cause.

The King of France, summoned again and again

to keep his vows, had replied with extraordinary impudence, that " he could not be bound by an oath given when he was in prison," and had at last joined in that so-called " Holy League " signed at Cognac on May 22, 1526, between the Pope, Venice, Florence, the Duke of Milan, and the Kings of France and England. By a supreme stroke of duplicity, Clement VII. actually commissioned his Nuncio in Spain, Baldassare Castiglione, to invite the Emperor's adhesion to the League, which Charles indignantly declared was " framed for his destruction." François I. tried to justify his conduct in a manifesto in which he complained that his vassal, the Duc de Bourbon, had been enticed away from him into open rebellion by the promises of the Emperor. To this Charles V. at once replied that " no promises would have had effect upon the soul of that prince, so truly worthy of the blood royal to which he belonged. Who indeed had caused his revolt but the King who had forced him to it by denying him the simplest justice in his legitimate rights ?

" Whose was the greed and cupidity shown by robbing the Duke of his estates by an iniquitous law-suit, not held before an ordinary tribunal, but before men specially chosen. . . . He was driven to revolt by persecution and ceaseless threats against his dignity, his honour, his position, his very life—most unworthy means to be used by a suzerain lord.

" And it is for these reasons that the Duc de Bourbon incurred no blame by asserting his freedom, and casting off the yoke of so intolerable and unjust a

subjection . . . or his life had been sacrificed . . . thus it was the duty and the right of Cæsar, in open hostilities, to give the Duc de Bourbon, his kinsman, the assistance he needed. . . . "[1]

This bold defence of Bourbon clearly shows the high estimation in which he was held by the calm and thoughtful young Emperor. During these anxious months of suspense, while there were still hopes of persuading the King of France to keep some of his engagements, he remained in Spain and appears to have been in the confidence of the Imperial council. There was a rumour that he was sent on a secret visit to Italy; this is mentioned by Oviedo and others. In any case he received another pledge of his master's confidence, by being appointed Captain-General of the army in Italy where he was soon to take part in his last and most eventful campaign.

[1] Answer of Charles V. quoted by Sandoval. From the Archives of Simancas.

CHAPTER XVI

FRANÇOIS I. REPUDIATES THE TREATY OF MADRID—THE " HOLY " LEAGUE, IN WHICH THE POPE, ENGLAND, FRANCE, VENICE AND FLORENCE COMBINE AGAINST THE EMPEROR—BOURBON UNDERTAKES THE DEFENCE OF MILAN—THE DUKE OF URBINO UNEXPECTEDLY RETIRES—THE CITADEL OF MILAN YIELDS TO BOURBON AND DUKE FRANCESCO SFORZA RETREATS TO LODI—THE DUKE OF URBINO BLOCKADES MILAN—THE COLONNA RAID UPON ROME.

THE Holy-League had lost no time. Clement VII. and the Venetians had collected their troops under the command of Giovanni delle Bande Nere, Guido Rangone, and the Duke of Urbino, general of the Venetian army, who was soon to be chosen Generalissimo. The great condottiere Giovanni had been laid up some time from the effects of the wound received before Pavia. It had been a cruel disappointment for him to miss the battle, where François I. always declared that he should never have been taken prisoner with the Medici captain by his side. On his recovery, finding no work for him amongst the intrigues of European policy, Giovanni had gone to his favourite refuge, Fano near Ancona, where he could command the Adriatic, and play the part of a pirate against pirates with his Black Bands. He had never received the lavish pay promised by the French King, and had applied in vain to the Regent Louise.

But all changed after the League of Cognac had been signed. The Black Bands were in great demand, and Machiavelli foretold that their leader would be the saviour of Italy. He was to serve France and the Pope. On June 6 he received from the Curia 2500 ducats to raise 2000 foot-soldiers, with orders to reach Piacenza as soon as possible.

The Florentine troops had for their captain, Vitello Vitelli, a companion after the Medici's own heart, but Guido Rangone of Bologna always met with open resistance and fierce jealousy from him. It was partly carelessness on the part of their employers, for both these chiefs assumed the title of general, and it was all that Francesco Guicciardini could do to keep the peace between them.

The combined army had about 20,000 foot-soldiers, 2000 men-at-arms, and more than 2000 light infantry. At the beginning of July, the camp of the League was formed at Marignano. Never had the Pope displayed so much boldness and resolution; he no longer showed the weakness and vacillation which were so characteristic of him. He had "raised his mask"; but under the mask, did he show his face, or was it indeed only another mask? When the Duke of Sessa, the Emperor's ambassador, asked Clement VII. if he wished to fight against his master, as in that case he would go to the Imperial camp; the Pope replied: "You are free to go or to stay; but when I make war you will hear the trumpets."

This was all that Giovanni of the Black Bands cared for; he hated the life in camp where his quarrels

Anderson, photo

ALFONSO I D'ESTE, DUKE OF FERRARA
By Dosso Dossi

with other captains were a constant scandal, but when he had the chance of a skirmish there was no one like him : he could pierce an enemy through and through with his lance, and throw him into a ditch, without even stopping his horse.

Charles V. made one last attempt at disarming his foes. He sent Ugo de Moncada to try if he could detach the Pope from the League by any concession, but if this failed he was to treat with Alfonso, Duke of Ferrara, and the Colonna. He was also to offer terms to the Duke of Milan, but Francesco Sforza replied that he could not break with his allies. Moncada and the other ambassadors wrote urgent letters to the Emperor, imploring him to send the Duc de Bourbon into Lombardy, and Lannoy to Naples, as soon as possible, for the Imperial army was at present insufficient, unpaid, and badly commanded. Meantime negotiations went on with the Duke of Ferrara, to whom they had promised the possession of Modena and other places ; they had written to the Archduke Ferdinand to raise a large company of landsknechte, and send them at once to Italy. Ugo de Moncada then went on to the kingdom of Naples, where he was to concert with the Colonna.

The Imperial troops in Milan were commanded by the Marquess del Vasto, nephew of Pescara, and Antonio de Leyva, and for months they had continued the siege of the Citadel, which was well supplied with men, ammunition, and provisions. Some time before, the populace, worn out with military encroachments,

had risen in arms, shutting up all their shops and showing so much determination, that the Spaniards, between two fires, were compelled to retreat as far as San Silvestro. During two months, the insurgent citizens defended themselves gallantly under the command of a Milanese gentleman, Messer Pietro de Pusterla,[1] but at length when the army of the League was formed, Vasto and de Leyva felt that they must regain possession of the city, which they treated like a conquered place, although pillage was forbidden.

Milan was in this state of oppression and hatred for its rulers, when the combined army of the League, having taken Lodi, advanced upon it, and the front of the lines encamped so near the ramparts, that the cantonments of the Black Bands was almost within reach of the artillery on the city walls. The Duke of Urbino ought to have arrived before, but he had waited at Marignano until early in July, for the Swiss, who did not arrive. Most opportunely for the Imperial army, it so chanced that the very same day, after a most wonderful series of forced marches, the Duc de Bourbon arrived with his forces.

Chosen as Captain-general of the army in Italy, he had started from Barcelona on June 24, with six ships laden with 800 soldiers. The fleet of the League, scattered and badly managed, was not able to bar his passage, and he entered unopposed the harbour of Genoa which was not defended. After having received

[1] The account of this spirited revolt was written from day to day by a certain Burigosso. See Archivio Storieo Italiano, VIII., p. 459.

from the bankers 100,000 ducats in payment of the letters of exchange sent by Charles V., he had set forth without a moment's delay towards Milan, which he entered on the evening of July 5. Here he took command of the whole force, which consisted of about 9000 men, including both Spaniards and Germans, and he distributed a portion of their pay, to encourage them for the fighting before them. But his presence alone, with his splendid reputation for audacity and success, made him a host in himself. The task before the gallant general was no easy one, for the hosts of the League who had arrived from the south-east, were in number nearly three times as great as the soldiers under his command. The city was not well fortified, and the suburbs still less so; while if they were taken the place would assuredly fall into the hands of the foe.

It only needed a bold attack, and the position of the Imperial army would be desperate, with the citadel firing on them from above, and the citizens rising in hatred against their oppressors. A perilous retreat towards Pavia would be their only chance, as de Leyva wrote. But the Duke of Urbino, with his usual caution and hesitation, missed the fine opportunity of carrying the city by assault. He pointed three cannons at the Porta Romana, he had ladders placed against the walls, and requested his men-at-arms to dismount and begin the assault, always a most offensive order for these cavaliers in their heavy armour; so that instead of a vigorous attack, there only resulted a weak skirmish. The Duke Francesco

Maria then sent some soldiers towards the ditches, but there were not enough to make a bold rush to cross them and seize the ramparts. As for the three cannons in front of the Porta Romana, before they had done any harm, the General changed his mind about the proposed assault of the gate, saying the day was too far advanced. In one or two skirmishes, about forty men had been killed by the Spanish arquebusiers, while many others had been wounded and some prisoners had been taken.

The army of the Duke of Urbino prepared to spend the night at the place where it had halted, and that same evening, six more cannons arrived for the Venetians. There was also a rumour from spies, that the Imperial army was engaged in packing up baggage as if for a retreat, and hopes rose high for the morrow. But what was the general dismay when, before the night was far advanced, there came an order from the Duke of Urbino that the army was to retreat at once. He himself saw to the departure of the artillery and ammunition, and the Venetian troops which he commanded, and then sent to the Lieutenant of the Pope and the other captains of the League, informing them of the decision to which he had come, and requesting them to follow his example. These officers were astounded and tried to point out that everything was in their favour, but the Duke replied in his usual obstinate way that he was in command, and that he would not compromise the safety of his army by even waiting until the morrow, as in their dangerous position, they would be destroyed by the cannons

which the Spaniards would place upon the ramparts during the night. Finding him quite determined, the generals of the League most unwillingly yielded, with the exception of the fiery Giovanni dei Medici, who refused to take part in this shameful nocturnal flight. He boldly declared that, with his Black Bands, who composed the Papal infantry, he would wait until broad day-light; which he did, slowly and defiantly retiring in full view of the enemy and without the loss of a single man. The besieged were far too delighted, to fire a single shot at the army which gave up the attack in this amazing fashion.

The Duke of Urbino had made his way back to Marignano, amidst the murmurs and contempt of his soldiers who said of him in ridicule: "Veni, vidi, *fugi*." When Clement VII. heard of this adventure, he was greatly troubled, and even suspected that there was hidden treachery, and that Francesco Maria might have received some secret order from Venice.

The Imperial army in Milan made the most of this unexpected leisure to thoroughly fortify the suburbs, repair the walls, and man the battlements, while at the same time they disarmed the citizens, and even turned out of the city all those who seemed most dangerous to their cause. In their distress, the chief men of the city made a pitiful appeal to the Duc de Bourbon, whom they addressed as their only hope and the future lord of the duchy, assuring him that his clemency and generosity would win their hearts and make them in the days to come his faithful

subjects. He replied most kindly to the appeal, and said that he desired nothing more than to relieve their anxiety and redress their wrongs. He pointed out that the cruelty from which they had suffered was altogether contrary to the Emperor's wishes, and had been caused in a measure by the licence of war, and the need of money by the soldiers who had not received their pay. He told them that he had brought some money with him, but unfortunately not enough to satisfy the troops, and that if the inhabitants would subscribe 30,000 ducats towards their payments for one month, he would move them into a camp outside the city.

Although this was a very large sum, the citizens did their best to collect a portion, and a number of the soldiers were encamped outside the walls; but unfortunately the sufferings of the people still continued, for the other captains, in their intense jealousy of Bourbon, would make no effort to keep his promises of moderation and fair treatment, and thus add to his popularity. There was a great want of provisions, and the surrounding country was ravaged by the army of the League, while within the Citadel the situation was now becoming quite desperate. They were so reduced by famine, that on the night of the 16th of July, the garrison sent away more than three hundred "useless mouths," soldiers as well as women and children. Although the sentinel gave the alarm at the first sound, they met with no opposition, and were able to effect their escape under cover of an entrenchment, about six feet high, which protected

the approach to the open country. The fugitives reached Marignano in safety, where the army was encamped, and the Duke of Urbino, who had now received his expected contingent of more than 5000 Swiss, could not refuse to attempt once more the relief of the Citadel, where the garrison were now reduced to such terrible extremity. It was therefore unanimously decided that the army should march straight to the Citadel, that the churches of San-Gregorio and of Sant' Angelo should be seized, and that the united troops should encamp under the walls of Milan.

Thus, ten days after that futile retreat, the army of the League once more retraced its steps on July 22, and this time Francesco Maria decided to stop at a place called Ambra, between the Abbey of Casaretto and the river of the Ambro. But once established there he changed his mind again, and placed one end of his camp against the abbey and the other farther down the river, stretching out to the right. The position was fairly strong, and the Duke preferred it "because being nearer the Citadel they would be less exposed to the insults of the town, and more free to turn any side they wished; besides, in giving the alarm to the enemy from different sides, they would compel them to multiply their guards, which would fatigue them very much, considering the small number of their troops."

On the same day, a detachment marched against Monza, which promptly surrendered on favourable terms, but the Citadel which stood out, was battered

into submission the next day. Once more there were long discussions in the camp of the League, and the Duke of Urbino argued that he really did not think it was possible to save the Citadel of Milan. They were still disputing on the subject when news arrived that the garrison was about to surrender. Without finding out if the rumour was true, the Duke expressed his satisfaction, saying that now, thanks to his prudence, the army of the League remained safe and sound instead of being dragged into a risky adventure ! While he was making these absurd remarks, the loss of the Citadel was definitely confirmed.

This is what had happened. When the army had so abruptly retreated by night, Bourbon sent a herald-at-arms to the Duke Francesco Sforza, to salute him with all honour and offer him the most favourable conditions. In that hour of despair, when he felt himself forsaken, Sforza who was almost reduced to starvation, was at length willing to begin negotiations. He signed on July 24, a treaty by which, without any prejudice to his rights, he placed the Citadel of Milan in the hands of the Emperor's representative ; he had the right to pass out freely with all his garrison and to retire into the town of Como, of which he should have the government and the revenues which would be made up to the amount of 30,000 ducats a year. If he desired, Sforza should have safe-conduct to the presence of Charles V. ; his troops then in the Citadel should receive their pay until the day of the capitulation, amounting to a sum of 20,000 ducats. These most advantageous conditions were readily granted

by Bourbon, who was not at all sure that the Duke of Urbino might not appear at any moment, and was in haste to take possession. Sforza and the garrison left the next morning and were conducted with a strong escort to the camp of the Confederates; he remained there all day, and then went on to Como. Here he found that the enemy had not removed their garrison, as that was not in the agreement; and he thought it wiser to establish himself in Lodi, which was given over to him by the Duke of Urbino, and he now definitely joined the Holy League.

It appears to have dawned upon the Duke of Urbino that he had committed a great mistake in losing the Citadel of Milan by his hesitation and delay, for he offered to give up the supreme command, and it required all the influence of the Pope to induce him not to abandon his position. He now turned round completely, and having declined to take the city of Milan by assault when all combined to make it possible, he now resolved to sit down quietly before the walls and reduce it by famine, which he felt sure he could accomplish in three months or less; an immediate siege seemed to him useless and dangerous. In vain it was pointed out to him that the blockade would only be possible if the Imperial side received no reinforcements from Germany; he replied that "he knew the vivacity of the Duc de Bourbon, and that he was sure to risk something, therefore it was better not to move until this opportunity for a victory should occur."

We learn from a letter of Bourbon to the Emperor,

of July 25, 1526, that he gave the command of this strong Citadel of Milan to his old friend Tansannes, one of the gentlemen of his dominions in the Bourbonnais, who had joined his revolt and followed him in his flight. We are constantly reminded of the unfailing gratitude which Charles de Bourbon showed towards all his faithful adherents. In every one of his memoirs about the restoration of his own estates, he mentions his friends by name, and insists upon their rights and property being restored to them.

The Italian members of the League were greatly troubled at receiving none of the assistance promised by the King of France, who was, in truth, more interested in its success than any one else. But he had neither sent the galleys which were to blockade the harbour of Genoa, governed by the Doge Hieronimo Adorno a staunch supporter of the Emperor, nor had he sent across the Alps the 500 men-at-arms and 4000 foot-soldiers, who, under the Marquis de Saluces were to have joined the Confederates' army ; nor had he supplied the promised money which was to have paid for Swiss levies. The Pope and his other allies were both irritated and alarmed by the long delay of François I. to fulfil his engagements. " If the French do not help us . . . we shall either be defeated or come to an agreement, which will amount to the same thing . . ." wrote Giberti, the Pope's minister, in despair. The Bishop of Bayeux, the French ambassador at Venice, was still more urgent. He ventured to write to his master : " The delays of Your Majesty, which cause so much suspicion to the confederates, will cause the Pope

and this Most Serene Republic to lose courage. They will repent that they have advanced so far, seeing that they receive nothing which was promised to them. It seems strange that, this League having been concluded for two months, France has done nothing. . . . All things depend upon the beginning. This is not the way Sire to follow, for lowering the power of the Emperor, but rather to make him much greater than he is already."[1] Did the King remember these prophetic words later? He was at the time engaged in another piece of treachery, seeking to make terms for himself with Charles V.

Still the army of the League was carrying on the campaign in Northern Italy. At the beginning of August, the Duke of Urbino set out to besiege Cremona with the Venetian forces, while he left the papal troops at Marignano to keep guard on Milan. Here Giovanni dei Medici had full scope for those astounding skirmishes which no enemies could resist, and which covered his famous Black Bands with glory. The camp of those days was a lively place, and the son of Catarina Sforza took his full share in all the incessant brawling amongst the condottieri, and the subsequent feasting in token of reconciliation. We have a full account of one of these stupendous banquets, with five services of forty dishes; four ways of cooking partridges, three kinds of pheasant, wild boar, peacocks, bustards, ducks smothered in macaroni . . . where the gentlemen were so cheered by the wines from Lombardy, from Piedmont, Tuscany and Sicily,

[1] Of 22nd July. "Lettere di Principi."

on that Saturday night when the camp was a brilliant display of torches, that they amused themselves by hurling stones at every tent not lighted up.

Bandello tells of a delightful adventure during this dreary siege of Milan. Early in August, Florence sent hither Nicolas Macchiavelli, to his great delight, for nothing pleased him better than to pose as an ambassador. He arrived at the besieging camp, with his head full of theories and strategies of war ; quite ready to teach these soldiers the " Art of War," on which he had written so learned a book. He and Giovanni were excellent friends, both Tuscans who could chaff each other in their familiar dialect ; while Nicolas the statesman had often been useful in obtaining pay for the impecunious condottiere. One day this " most ingenious Messire Macchiavelli seems to have obtained permission to manœuvre 3000 foot-soldiers, according to the rules which he had laid down." " That day," says Bandello ; " he kept us all for two hours in a blazing sunshine, but he could do nothing with the men. Yet all the time he talked so well and so clearly, pointing out that the thing was so extraordinarily easy, that, ignorant as I am, I felt quite sure that I could place that infantry in battle order."

At length Giovanni delle Bande Nere lost patience and cried : " Bandello, I am going to put an end to this tedious business, that we may go and have our dinner." Thereupon, he ordered the discomfited Messire Nicolas to retire and let him do the work ; when, as quick as lightning, by the help of his drums, he moved the troops in a variety of different ways and combinations, to the

extreme admiration of the spectators. Macchiavelli took his fiasco very well, and at the evening feast, exclaimed with a laugh, that "he quite believed they would still have been out there with the men, if His Grace had not settled the business."

Yet this rough Giovanni could show the most refined courtesy in his behaviour towards his fellow-countrymen, who in that disastrous war, happened to be on the other side. When the Marquess del Vasto was ill with fever and longed for the fresh pomegranates of Lombardy, the Medici sent a man with a safe-conduct to Brianza, and later a trumpeter as far as Bergamo, "to get more." There were tournaments in which besieged and besiegers joined, and Giovanni could not resist sending de Leyva a stinging announcement of the fall of Cremona. But he was paid back in kind by this letter; "Illustrious Lord. The other day your Grace sent me word of the fall of Cremona, for which I thank you. Allow me to pay you back with the news from Rome. You will understand this exchange. . . . Je me recommande . . ." and Leyva signed with his own hand and a Spanish flourish.

We must leave these humours of the camp to turn to the "news from Rome," which were indeed amongst the stern realities of this terrible war. When Ugo de Moncada found that he could not induce the Pope to break off his alliance with the French King, he met the Colonna family, who were in open hostility to Clement VII. They took possession of Agnani, and were a constant menace to Rome, so that the Pope welcomed the offer of Moncada to arrange terms of peace with

them. These were signed on August 22, but only a month after this deceptive treaty, the Colonna raised 8000 peasants in their dominions, and marched against the eternal city, which they entered by the Lateran gate. Clement VII. was completely taken by surprise, for he had disbanded most of his soldiers, from motives of economy. His first idea was to clothe himself in his pontifical robes, seat himself in the Apostolic chair, and await his foes, as Pope Boniface VIII. had received another Colonna two centuries before. But wiser counsels prevailed, and he fled with most of his cardinals to the fortress of Sant'Angelo. The Colonna followers at once broke into the Palace of Vatican, pillaged it thoroughly and carried off the gold and silver plate from the altars of St Peter's. They also sacked some of the cardinals' houses. Clement VII. in terror, sent for Moncada and promised to withdraw from the League ; to call back his troops from before Milan, and the galleys he had sent to Genoa. He also swore to pardon the Colonna ; and as guarantees of his word, he gave as hostages, Filippo Strozzi and a young Salviati, both his kinsmen, whom he found very useful for such purposes.

Even Bourbon's worst enemies exonerate him from all knowledge of this unworthy raid. He wrote to the Emperor : " . . . You will see that Don Ugo has made peace between the Pope and the Colonna, but whether this is good or evil for your cause, I leave your Majesty to consider. . . ." When once the peril was over, Clement made no scruple of breaking his word. He did not recall Giovanni dei Medici from the camp before

Milan, knowing that the army would be lost without this valiant condottiere, who kept the enemy occupied with his constant dashing skirmishes, who saw to everything; arranged each attack, chose the gunpowder from specimens brought to him, and was the very life of the army. Clement VII. pretended that his nephew and the Black Bands, numbering 4000, were in the pay of François I. The Pope continued to pay the Swiss, and a number of foot-soldiers, men-at-arms, and light cavalry in Piacenza. He sent indeed for some of his troops, but when they arrived, he proceeded to storm all the castles of the Colonna and carry ruin and desolation amongst their helpless peasantry.

Castiglione tells us that it was with a feeling of horror and dismay that the Emperor heard of the raid of the Colonna and the pillage of the Vatican. In any case Moncada had advised his master to say so. But distressing as this might be to his pious mind, it was half forgotten in the terrible disaster which had overwhelmed all Christendom, when on August 20, 1526, King Louis of Hungary and his whole army were slain on the fatal field of Mohàcs. Surely now, thought Charles V., the Pope and the Christian Kings would combine against the Infidel, from whom all Christendom was in deadly peril?

We wonder whether François I. remembered that ill-judged letter of his, praying the Sultan to help him by invading Hungary? He certainly had also written him another most friendly letter on his return to France.[1] The Pope could express the most noble

[1] "Captivité." No. 257.

and pious sentiments, but he cared for nothing but his personal triumph ; only the Emperor was in deadly earnest about the proposed crusade against the Turk, and he had already, with immense difficulty sent some troops to help his brother-in-law, but they arrived too late, when the fatal stroke had fallen. His widowed sister, Queen Marie of Hungary, made despairing appeal to him, and his brother Ferdinand, whose wife, Anne, was sister of the unfortunate Louis, and who had now the first claim to the throne of Hungary. The magnitude of the need for help of that frontier kingdom, the bulwark of Europe, was so great at the moment, that all else sank into insignificance before it.

MARIE DE BOURGOGNE, QUEEN OF HUNGARY
By Jan Gossaert (Mabuse)
By permission of M. Charles Leon Cardon

CHAPTER XVII

THE DUC DE BOURBON SHUT UP IN MILAN, BESIEGED BY THE ARMY OF THE LEAGUE—CREMONA TAKEN—THE LANDSKNECHTE OF GEORG VON FRUNDSBERG CROSS THE ALPS AND ENTER ITALY—DEATH OF GIOVANNI "DELLE BANDE NERE"—BOURBON JOINS VON FRUNDSBERG, AND TOGETHER THEY CROSS LOMBARDY—DISMAY OF CLEMENT VII.—HE MAKES A TREATY WITH THE EMPEROR, ONLY TO BREAK IT AT THE FIRST OPPORTUNITY.

AMONGST the sovereigns of Europe, Charles V., the young Emperor of twenty-six, was the only one who kept his steady course, undismayed by disaster, never elated by success. Those long years of careful training in his childhood by the noble-minded Marguerite, his aunt, had strengthened his judgment and made him master of his passions; while he had acquired habits of careful study and assiduous attention to his duties which were invaluable to him as a great ruler. The Venetian ambassador, Contarini, describes him at this time as "of a serious character, very religious, with an ardent love of justice, a stranger to the light pleasures common to men of his age, giving himself rarely the distraction of the chase, although a splendid athlete, the equal of any of his nobles in joust or tournament. He was constantly occupied in the government of his immense dominions and the management of his affairs. He delights in negotiations and in presiding at his Councils.

In this he is most assiduous and spends most of his time." [1]

We can well understand that such a man would never forgive François I. for his perjured treachery in breaking his solemn word and treaty ; indeed, so bitter was the Emperor against the King of France, that he actually suggested to Castiglione that he should be his second in a duel between the two sovereigns, in which he believed " that God would show His justice, without exposing so many Christians to death." Charles V. had already shown his indignation against the Pope for his constant intrigues and deceit, by a letter full of stern condemnation, which he caused to be published throughout his dominions, and in which he threatened to summon a General Council to bring Clement VII. to judgment for his grievous misdeeds. He reminded the Pope that it was by his help that he had gained this high dignity. He accused him of his treachery in joining the " Holy " League, and wound up by calling upon Clement VII. to join him in working together for the good of Christendom, " in expelling the Barbarians and putting an end to sects and errors."

We know how vain and futile was this appeal. War to the death was declared against him, and the Emperor took up the challenge with his usual thoroughness. He neglected nothing that would hinder the progress of that hateful League, which he sought to defeat by the force of arms as well as to dissolve it by negotiation. He equipped a fleet on the Spanish coast, of some war-ships and many transport vessels,

[1] Relazione di Gasparo Contarini.

which were to convoy about 10,000 Spanish and German soldiers, commanded by Lannoy and by Alarçon, the faithful guardian for so many months of his royal prisoner. The Emperor ordered an immediate levy in Germany of a great number of landsknechte, pressing his brother Ferdinand to send them to Lombardy as soon as possible under the command of the veteran condottiere, Georg Frundsberg. In the way of diplomacy, he encouraged a visit of the ambassador of François I., not so much with the idea of agreeing to his secret offers, but to raise the suspicions of the Pope and the Venetians, Charles explains this in one of his constant letters to the Duc de Bourbon, whom he also asks to help him in his endeavour to win over Alfonso, Duke of Ferrara, to the Imperial side. This crafty prince had already changed his policy several times, and had played a game of duplicity with Pope Clement, who had taken the meanest advantage of him. In his rage, Alfonso had been on the point of conniving at the secret poisoning of this unworthy successor of St Peter, and had only been restrained by the outspoken horror of the honest Chevalier Bayard.[1] Still his deadly hatred remained unchanged, and this had very important results later when he had joined the Imperial cause.

Meanwhile Bourbon remained shut up in the city of Milan, with its inhabitants on the point of revolt, his soldiers dying around him in the malarious atmosphere (as he writes to the Emperor, " during the last month, there have been quite 3000 of your men laid

[1] " Le Loyal Serviteur."

up with sickness . . . "), eating out his heart with the enforced comparative inaction, and sadly brooding over his wrongs. The money he had received from Spain was not enough to pay his soldiers, who were reduced to terrible extremities, for, in point of fact, the resources of Charles V. were quite insufficient to meet the claims of his vast possessions. Like his grandfather Maximilian he was always in real distress for ready money. We cannot conceive a more wretched position than that of Charles de Bourbon at this time, and if the faults attributed to him by his enemies had been tenfold as great, he assuredly did ample penance for them in those long months of misery in the beleaguered city, which, by a touch of irony, was his by deed of gift.

Outside the walls, the only leader worthy to compare with him, hated this tedious siege almost as much as Bourbon did. Giovanni dei Medici, left in charge of the camp while the Duke of Urbino attacked Cremona, was even growing sick of the objectless skirmishes, and had only one word on his lips: "Let me depart." But it was quite impossible to spare him, and his departure was checked by the most urgent entreaties. The Pope gave him the long-desired Fano, Guicciardini saw that he had his pay, sent the Aretino to pacify him, and praised him to the skies—this captain who was always calling out his men, arming them, training them, and keeping them in the utmost efficiency. He was the only hope of the Pope, to oppose those terrible landsknechte who already threatened Italy from afar, and to protect Rome and

Tuscany. With clear insight, Guicciardini wished to arrest that awful torrent, about to cross the mountains, to ravage and lay waste, but it must be checked in time, and its force must be broken at the very frontier of Italy, or at least at the first great natural obstacle, such as the river Po. Who so capable of doing this as the dauntless Giovanni leading his Black Bands, who would follow him anywhere, but were lost without him ?

When Cremona was taken on September 23, the Medici captain fully expected that the Duke of Urbino would at once attack Milan and take it by assault with his victorious army, which consisted of about 20,000 foot-soldiers and 3000 cavalry. Great was his disappointment and that of the other leaders when the Generalissimo suffered three weeks to pass without any action, and then simply continued his timid plan of blockade, with the full knowledge that Bourbon was awaiting reinforcements from Spain and from Germany. The Imperial fleet set sail from Carthagena on October 24, manned with more than 9000 soldiers, and sailed towards Naples. On the way it was attacked by Andrea Doria and his galleys, and only saved by a tempest which caused the enemies to drift asunder. Lannoy did not risk another encounter but hurried on to the port of Gaeta, where he was able to disembark the troops without loss on December 1.

Bourbon was still writing the most urgent letters to hasten the coming of Frundsberg, and in his letter to Charles V. of October 6, we see that his spirit has kindled at the thought of action. " When this help

arrives, I hope, by the grace of God, to cure your enemies of making war upon your Majesty by gaining such a victory as will be a perpetual settlement of your dominions."

The Emperor had already sent 50,000 ducats to Frundsberg by way of Flanders; and Bourbon, at a great sacrifice, sent him another 36,000 to reach him by the Tyrolese Alps. The German leader was to bring 12,000 or 13,000 landsknechte from Swabia, Franconia, Bavaria, and the Tyrol; while amongst them, we are told, there were 4000 fanatics who served without pay in a kind of religious crusade against the Pope. Georg Frundsberg himself, according to the legend, was supposed to have a gold chain on his saddle with which to strangle the hated foe of the Lutherans. He set forth on his journey towards the end of October, and reached the Alps early in November. Like another Hannibal, the German condottiere led his army across the mountains amid all their wintry terrors. We need another Livy to chronicle the steep and difficult ascent, by unfrequented passes, of the stalwart host, encumbered with their long pikes and heavy two-handed swords; their baggage and provisions. Through perils from falling stones and avalanches, across the pathless expanse of untrodden snow with hidden glaciers and treacherous crevasses, they too reached the icy summit, "cold and worn and discouraged," and needed all their leader's glowing promises to remember that before them, beyond the mist and blinding snow, would lie their "way to Rome."

At length the mountains were crossed,[1] the descent was made between the Lago di Garda and the Lago di Ladro into the val di Sabbia, and on November 21, Frundsberg and his landsknechte reached Castiglione-delle Stivere, between Brescia and Mantua. They were now in the dominions of the young Marquis Frederico, the worthy son of the diplomatic Isabella d'Este, who was more than satisfied to play a neutral part, as at once Gonfaloniere of the Pope and Feudatory of the Emperor. The German troops were thus divided from their employer, the Duc de Bourbon at Milan, by a country difficult to cross and intersected by many rivers swollen with the wintry rains, and impossible to ford. Now, if ever, was the Duke of Urbino's opportunity to prevent the junction of the two portions of the Imperial army. Having given up the blockade of Milan when he heard of Frundsberg's approach, he was now encamped on the banks of the Adda, barring the way with the whole of his forces. It was a critical moment and, as usual, the Duke failed from over-caution, and made the one fatal mistake. He divided his army, which would have been powerful enough to overwhelm the German foot-soldiers, as not only being double their number, he had also the advantage of arquebusiers, men-at-arms, and light cavalry. He left the Marquis of Saluces in the fortified camp on the Adda with half his troops, and with the remainder, including Giovanni dei Medici and his Black Bands, he set forth on November 19 to meet

[1] A month later than Hannibal had passed over the Alps of Savoy.

the coming landsknechte—not with any idea of boldly fighting them, but in order to harass their movements and interfere with their supplies. Francesco Maria thus weakened his army by division, at the time when Bourbon sought to strengthen his by concentration.

The serried bands of Georg Frundsberg were thus able to march on unmolested towards Governolo, on the Po, and were stretching out to reach the bridge of Borgoforte, the great strategic point of all these wars. They had made an urgent demand for artillery from the Duke of Ferrara, who sent them by river four falconets (breach-loading cannons, turning on a pivot), with shot weighing thirty or forty pounds. The Duke of Urbino had followed them here, at a safe distance, but Giovanni delle Bande Nere, true to his usual tactics, boldly advanced and attacked the enemy's rear-guard, feeling sure of success in the open country, and believing that they had no artillery. The skirmish was apparently successful, and Giovanni was turning his horse to retreat, when he was struck in the leg by a heavy shot, well aimed from a falconet hidden behind an entrenchment. The general tendency of the day was to make the armour lighter, and as a result the greaves often covered only the front of the leg completely, while the cuisses (armour round the lower thigh) were hollowed out at the back. The crushing blow was so terrible that the wounded man could not be moved at once even to his own lodging in camp, and it was icy, piercing weather on those Mantuan marshes. They sent in haste for the Jewish doctor, Abraham, who had tended Giovanni after his

wound at Pavia, and who caused him to be carried on a litter—through eight weary miles of drizzling snow, beneath a black funereal sky—to Mantua. There he was received in the palace of his old friend Luigi Gonzaga, and Pietro Aretino hastily joined him. The patient's condition was so dangerous, and the confused wound in such a fearful state, full of fragments of steel and broken bones . . . that the surgeons in despair declared that amputation was the only chance.

When this was broken to him by Aretino, he replied: "Do it quickly," as calmly as if he had been riding at the head of his troop. The instruments were brought in. Abraham asked for ten or twelve persons to hold the patient during the operation. . . . Giovanni of the Black Bands heard him and smiled: "Twenty could not hold me," said he. He placed himself as directed, took the candle in his hand, and held it to light the surgeon's operation. . . .

The night passed well, but in the early morning he was taken with violent pains, and soon grew so much worse that he felt it time to make his will. The formal, elaborate document is now before me; pages of pompous Latin, with a few lines of Italian in the middle, probably his own words (all that had real meaning), "that his impulsive devoted wife Maria Salviati should be the sole guardian of the precious young son Cosimo.[1] . . ."

Making his will seems to have given a naïve satisfaction to this destitute Prince of a noble house, who of his great heritage had now little to leave behind him

[1] To be one day Grand Duke of Florence.

save debts and the unfulfilled promises of the faithless Clement VII., his uncle. After this came his confession. The dying condottiere said to the priest: "My father, I have followed the profession of arms and I have lived a soldier's life. . . . If it were not forbidden, I would confess in the presence of all, for I have never done anything unworthy of myself."

As the night passed on he grew worse and received the last rites of the Church. The end was at hand, but he found strength to say: "I will not die in the midst of these plasters," and was lifted to a camp bed where he fell asleep, to wake no more. He died on November 29, 1526, at the age of twenty-eight, after a crowded life of adventure and fighting. The loss of this great warrior was a serious blow to the League, and it seemed to the Italians the ruin of their hopes.

The cautious Duke of Urbino took advantage of this disaster, to remain quietly in Mantua, under the pretext that he was awaiting orders from Venice. He made no further attempt even to follow the landsknechte, who crossed the Po unmolested at Ostia, and moved on towards Piacenza. They met with no other obstacles on their way than swollen torrents, for they had to cross the Secchia, the Enza, the Parma, and the Taro, before they reached in the middle of December Fiorenzuola d'Adda, where they encamped, to await the coming of the Imperial troops from Milan.

Notwithstanding all his impatience for the coming of Frundsberg, it was nearly two months later before the Duc de Bourbon was able to join him. The various sums received from the Emperor had left his

soldiers' pay so much in arrear, that they refused to move from Milan without receiving their money. In this difficult position, Bourbon was compelled to extract the last penny, "jusqu'au sang," from the inhabitants of the city, and also obtained by threats 20,000 ducats from Morone, a prisoner at Trezzo, as the price of his pardon. Even this was not enough, and the Duc de Bourbon, the Marquess del Vasto, Antonio de Leyva, and other captains pawned their jewels, their rings and gold chains to make up another 20,000 ducats for the soldiers' payment.[1] Then at length, on January 2, he was able to set forth from Milan, leaving de Leyva in command to protect the place with 2000 foot-soldiers and 1500 Italians. Bourbon was joined at Pavia, where he stayed for a week, by Philibert de Châlon, Prince of Orange, who in his fierce indignation at the broken promises of François I., had come to offer himself as a volunteer in the service of the Emperor.

We can understand how the two young princes were drawn to each other by the same disappointed hopes and the same cruel wrongs. When the King of France broke his solemn oath and repudiated the Treaty of Madrid, which had secured his freedom, he had betrayed alike the Duc de Bourbon and the Prince of Orange, whom he had sworn to pardon and reinstate in their doiminions. What memories must that battle-field of Pavia have recalled to them when their common enemy was at their mercy! Can we wonder at their undying hatred, and insatiable longing

[1] Letter from Bourbon to Charles V. on February 8, 1527.

for vengeance against the treacherous King who had betrayed them ?

It was not until February 9 that the army of the Duc de Bourbon at last crossed the Trebbia,[1] and joined the landsknechte. Possibly he delayed in the hope of receiving money from the Emperor, for at that time 100,000 crowns were already due to Frundsberg's levies, while there was nothing in hand to pay for maintaining so large an army in the field. It often seems as though the princes of that day, who were so free in their orders for foreign mercenaries, were quite incapable of doing the simplest sum in multiplication. Had they any idea of the enormous amount required not merely for the daily pay of a soldier, but for the expense of his living ? And when this accumulated for many weeks and months, how did they expect to provide the immense sum, without which these soldiers of fortune would decline to fight, or return home ?

All great generals, like Bourbon, had a very clear view of this, and had the Emperor been in a position to send the amount for which he was responsible, the end of this story might have been very different. As Charles de Bourbon wrote to him in despair ; " As for we others, we can only place our life at your service." He did all that man could do.

With the design of invading central Italy, he set the army in order. The command of the van-guard was given to the Prince of Orange, with the light

[1] The ancient Trevia, memorable for the victory of Hannibal, 218 B.C.

cavalry and the men-at-arms. The Marquess of Vasto led the Spanish infantry of which he was the Captain-general; Georg von Frundsberg was at the head of his formidable landsknechte, and young Fernando Gonzaga, the youngest son of Isabella d'Este, had a company of Italian soldiers under his command. There was a skirmish before Piacenza, which the Marquess de Saluces protected, and where the Duke of Orange had a narrow escape, as his horse was killed, and in the mélée, he lost the plumes on his helmet. The Imperial army then moved on to San-Giovanni where it encamped to be within reach of the Duke of Ferrara, who promised Bourbon provision, ammunition, and money, and in his deep hatred of Clement VII., strongly urged an attack on Florence and Rome.

The Duke of Urbino encamped with part of the troops of the League at Casal-Maggiore, near Bologna, carrying out his usual tactics of awaiting events.

Meantime the Pope was watching from afar, "in anxious thought, the storm seen to gather in the narrowing and lowering horizon." When the sturdy Germans crossed the Alps under their leader, he trembled for the safety of the dominions of the Church and of the State of Florence, almost as dear to him, and from this time he was destined to waver between the Emperor and the League, seek help from one side and negotiate with the other, until "by a series of treaties, treacheries, and tergiversations, he would deprive himself of every friend, and exasperate every

foe." [1] In his alarm he scarcely knew which way to turn. He wrote for fresh subsidies to Henry VIII., and appealed in the strongest terms to François I. for immediate and substantial help. His capable Nuncio, Acciaiuoli, thus wrote to the Most Christian King: "If Your Majesty does not now use all the might of France, all your soul, and all your courage for our common safety, Italy will soon be subject to the dominion of the Emperor, your sons will remain in prison all their life. . . . To-day Italy is reduced to such a condition that she can no longer resist alone against such a formidable invasion. . . . The coming of the landsknechte across the Po, the death of the Seigneur Giovanni dei Medici, the arrival of the Viceroy with the Spaniards; all these are mortal blows for the Pope and Florence. . . ." He implored the King to send 100,000 crowns at once, to raise a Swiss contingent, and if peace were not made, to come himself to Italy with all his army. . . . "The safety of Italy and of the world are in your hands . . . if we remain free, the honour and glory will be to Your Majesty. . . ."

François I. perfectly understood the situation, and he lost no time in promising all that was asked; he would certainly send large sums of money, and order a levy of 10,000 Swiss. Having settled this one minute, he forgot all about it the next, and with his usual frivolity, the King gaily made arrangements for a splendid hunting party in Champagne, to which all the great lords of his Court were invited and also the members of his Council. He was passionately

[1] J. Addington Symonds.

Alinari

FRANCESCO MARIA I DELLA ROVERE
After the picture by Titian in the Uffizi Gallery, Florence
(From the Ducal Collection)

fond of the chase, and liked to do things on a grand scale: this expedition was to last a fortnight, and to be carried out with the utmost luxury and magnificence. Can we wonder that François I. forgot all about those worrying affairs in Italy?

As the clear-sighted Nuncio wrote to Giberti in Rome: "Pleasant things always blot out serious matter from his mind; so that most frequently the words remain with us, while the deeds go to his amusements."[1] This had ever been the case with this light-hearted prince who had been trained from his earliest youth to look upon amusement as the main object of life. A delightful companion, he was the most hopeless and untrustworthy ally. Clever and intelligent, his quick insight seemed to grasp a subject at once, but in his frantic pursuit of distractions he forgot unpleasant matters with still more readiness, and seemed to think that when he had once promised a thing he might treat it as accomplished. At this critical moment, he did nothing; and we may imagine the growing despair of the Pope when he waited in vain, day after day, for the promised money and men of his French ally.

It was with extreme alarm that Clement VII. heard how Frundsberg and his men had been suffered to cross Lombardy, and that they had joined the forces of the Duc de Bourbon without opposition. The news from Southern Italy was also disquieting. The Viceroy of Naples had invaded the Papal States

[1] January 22, 1527. 'Che il pio delle volte le parole restono a noi e li effetti alli altri piaceri.'

and laid siege to Frosinone, an ancient hill town, about sixty miles south of Rome on the way to Naples. The Colonna had taken possession of the frontier towns of Ceprano and Pontecorvo, farther to the south. There was no immediate danger from these movements, as his enemies had only a small army; but the unfortunate Pope, in a very panic of terror, began his usual game of treachery. All the time he was fighting against the Emperor he had never ceased carrying on negotiations with him, and in this he was only following the example of the French King. He had sent Paolo d'Arezzo as his ambassador to Spain, and Charles V., on his side, was represented in Rome by the General of the Franciscans and his Master of the Horse, Cesare Ferramosca, who had succeeded the Duke of Sessa. Until this moment there had seemed no chance of an argeement, but now, in a perfect frenzy of alarm, Clement VII. declared himself willing to accept any proposals of peace.

All the clauses of the Treaty of Madrid were revived, Francesco Sforza was not to be replaced in the Dukedom of Milan, while the Pope who, with the Florentines was bound to find 200,000 ducats to send the landsknechte out of Italy, was to give up, as pledge of his fidelity, Piacenza, Parma, and Civita-Vecchia. When this amazing proposal was placed before the Cardinals in consistory, they declared that it was impossible for the Pope to agree to such conditions, and that rather than yield to them, "they must sell or pledge all the precious vases of the churches—the crosses, the chalices, and the reliquaries, nay, they

should even pawn their own persons rather than consent to such iniquity."

But Clement VII. was much too frightened to listen to these brave words, and on the last day of January 1527, he accepted the Treaty, and signed a week's truce in order to place it before the Venetians, who indignantly refused to have anything to do with it, and sent a copy to the King of France. It reached him at St Germain on February 16, and he was extremely annoyed, for it did not occur to him that he was in any way to blame. He summoned his council to meet the next day and sent for the Nuncio Acciaiuoli, and thus addressed him: "My Lord ambassador; the Pope has made a treaty with the Imperial side, greatly to our prejudice. . . . At this we are greatly amazed for we expected quite other conduct from His Holiness. . . . We had given orders to send him money, and we were on the eve of concluding an excellent arrangement with the King of England. . . . It is strange that His Holiness is willing to put himself in the power of the Emperor, who will make of him a simple priest (che lo farà tornare un semplice prete)[1]. . . . As the Pope has abandoned us, we will close in our lines, the King of England, the Lordship of Venice, and myself; I hope that God will help us and that we shall be strong enough to make an end of the Emperor."

Events happened quickly in those days, and it so chanced that on the very day when the Pope, in his overwhelming terror, had signed that humiliating

[1] The Nunzio's letter, February 17, 1527.

peace, the Pontificial troops had gained a decided victory in Southern Italy. The Cardinal-Legate Trivulzio, and the Pope's general Vitelli with an army of 10,000 men, attacked the Spanish troops of the Viceroy which were besieging Frosinone, and defeated them, driving them back in disorder into the Kingdom of Naples.

As soon as Clement VII. heard of this success, all his courage returned, and absolutely regardless of any truth or honour, he repudiated the agreement which he had been weak enough to sign on January 31; even before he received the protestations of Venice and France. Passing from one extreme to the other, he declared with boastful confidence that he would not only continue the war, but would pursue the conquest of the Kingdom of Naples, which he had already offered to François I. for one of his sons, who was to marry his niece, Catherine dei Medici, the orphan daughter of Duke Lorenzo of Florence and his wife, Madeleine de la Tour d'Auvergne.

This news reached François I. only a few days after his angry tirade, and he now completely recovered his good temper. But he sent a warning by the Nuncio, that " for the love of God he must keep up his courage, and meddle no more with truces or negotiations. . . . To tell the truth, his incessant practise of making terms, his fears, his projects of flight, have kept us undecided and made us always afraid that we should lose our time and our money. . . ."

This does not sound very respectful language for the Most Christian son of the Church to the Holy

Father. But he proceeds to make up for it somewhat, by the most lavish promises of large sums of money and the most substantial help. Flanders will be attacked by the King of England and the Duke of Guelders, while François himself will invade Spain by way of Navarre with 25,000 foot-soldiers and 200 lances, "and if the Pope does not make imaginary difficulties, we will impose any peace we like upon the Emperor, and make of the Pope the most glorious who has ever been."

It is curious to remember that of all the great schemes and promises of the King of France—his money help, his boastful invasions of the Empire, the oft-proposed alliance with Mary of England (whose fate in the end was an unhappy marriage with the son of Charles V.)—the only plan which was really carried out was the marriage of the Pope's niece, Catherine dei Medici, with Henri II. of France, disastrous for his race and his country.

CHAPTER XVIII

MARCH OF THE IMPERIAL ARMY ACROSS ITALY—REBELLION OF THE LANDSKNECHTE AGAINST THEIR LEADER, VON FRUNDSBERG—HE IS STRICKEN DOWN—THE DUC DE BOURBON COMPELLED TO LEAD THE SOLDIERS ON, AND TO OBEY THEIR WILL—THE MARQUESS DEL VASTO RETIRES—CLEMENT VII., IN ALARM, MAKES ANOTHER TREATY, BUT OFFERS TOO LITTLE—FERRAMOSCA AND LANNOY HAVE NO INFLUENCE OVER THE INVADING ARMY—THE POPE'S FOLLY AND VACILLATION—ATTACK ON ROME—DEATH OF BOURBON IN THE FIRST ASSAULT—THE CITY IS TAKEN AND GIVEN OVER TO PILLAGE—THE END.

IN the midst of this game of war on Italian ground — the unrehearsed tournament "à l'outrance," carried on in such deadly earnest— Charles, Duc de Bourbon stands forth as the central figure. The Pope, the King of France, the King of England, and even the Italian States were little more than awe-stricken spectators; while we may compare the Emperor to the Marshal of the Lists, watching with fascinated gaze, and almost bewildered by his champion's daring. Yet in the last resort, Charles V. must have known himself to be responsible for any coming event; he who wills the end, wills the means.

In all History there is no more tragic drama than the progress through Italy of that great army of alien soldiers, destitute and rebellious, who adored their

leader while they disobeyed him, and whose only hope of pay was in pillage. By the strange irony of events, in that Spring of 1527, Bourbon was in truth no longer a free agent, but was driven onwards by inexorable fate.

The Imperial army since February 9, had remained encamped between San Giovanni and Bologna, and was now in want of everything. The Duke of Ferrara had sent some provisions which were soon exhausted amongst so great a number, and Bourbon knew not how to feed his army or advance without money. The weather was most unfavourable, with continual heavy rains, and the soldiers were in such a state of destitution that they were on the point of mutiny. They demanded, almost with violence, the money owing to them, and as early as February 17, they went so far as to kill the sergeant-major, who had been sent to keep order amongst them. It needed all the ascendancy of Bourbon to make them understand that their interests were the same as his, and that revolt would destroy all chance of success.

Brantôme says that "his soldiers continued to complain that they had no money and that he must give them some. He addressed them all and pointed out that his necessities were as great as theirs; that he would die in want or would make them all rich; that they must have a little patience for he had no intention of defrauding them of the just payment for their services and their sufferings. To show his sympathy, he would give to divide amongst them all the silver vessels in his tent, and all the rings and jewels, furnishing and clothes in his coffers. He

would only reserve for himself the clothes he had on, and the surcoat of silver cloth which he wore above his armour." (They could always distinguish him in battle by this.) This generosity so delighted the soldiers that they swore never to forsake him, and to follow him wherever he led them, "fust à tous les diables."

Modern historians have scarcely realized the amazing courage and audacity of Bourbon which an Italian and an enemy[1] thus points out. "We cannot sufficiently admire the resolution and fortitude of the Connétable and of his army who, without money, without ammunition, without pioneers, without any assurance of provisions, undertook to pass through the midst of so many foes and of troops much superior in number to theirs. Perhaps the firmness of the Germans was still more surprising than that of the others; they had set forth from their country with a single ducat each, and after long sufferings in Italy, where they had only two or three ducats more, they set forth on the march, against the custom of all soldiers, especially of their nation, without any other pay than the hope of victory. They knew that it would be absolutely impossible for them to live without money if they found themselves in some place where it was difficult to obtain provisions, or if the enemy were close at hand."

While the invading army was in this condition, we cannot understand the extraordinary policy of the Duke of Urbino in not making a bold attack. Some

[1] Guicciardini.

historians have endeavoured to find an excuse for these tactics of inaction, by pointing out that the Duke was nominally the servant of the Venetian Council of Ten, and that he was always accompanied by the Providitore of Venice, Emo, who was in fact an official spy, to whom he had to explain and justify all his plans. Now it would not be in accordance with the usual cold and selfish policy of Venice to risk anything by dashing action, and heroic devotion to the cause of the Pope, whose real intentions were more than doubtful. As it has been well observed, "What army commanded by a debating club ever escaped discomfiture and disaster?"[1] In any case the Duke of Urbino's constant hesitation and delay could only lead to misfortune.

After the victory at Frosinone, the southern army of the League carried on the war with some spirit for a time. Renzo da Ceri invaded the Abruzzi with 6000 men levied in haste and took Aquila, Tagiacozza and Celano; while the fleet commanded by the Count de Vaudemont was fortunate in gaining possession of Pozzuoli, Gaeta, Castellamare and Sorrento. But the Pope's troops and navy waited in vain for the promised strong help of the King of France, and their means were quite insufficient for farther conquest; indeed Renzo da Ceri was unable to advance into Apulia, and the Papal army, receiving neither pay nor provisions, refused to remain in the field and disbanded. The Viceroy at once took advantage of this to cross the frontier of the Kingdom of Naples and invade the

[1] Macaulay.

Papal States, advancing without opposition to the ancient Roman city of Piperno (Privernum) in the midst of the Volscian hills.

Once more Clement VII. was in despair, and knew not which way to turn. He had no means to keep an army for the protection of his States to the south, and the Northern army under the Duke of Urbino could not even prevent the approach of Bourbon and Frundsberg. He had exhausted the treasury of Saint Peter, and could wring no more from Florence which had already advanced him the enormous sum of 800,000 ducats since the beginning of the war. As for François I., he had proved as usual a broken reed, for his magnificent promises had not been kept. He sent a small sum of money too late to be of much use, and the same with any ships for the invasion of Naples. Reduced to extremity, the Pope, a prey to his fears, again began to hold conferences with the Imperial ambassadors. He invited the coming of Cesare Ferramosca who brought this time more favourable terms from the Emperor. He hoped to take each member of the League separately ; first to detach the Pope and so preserve the Kingdom of Naples from invasion, then to send the army of Bourbon into the territory of Venice to live there at the expense of the Republic, until the Ten should be driven to make a peace which would leave Italy at his mercy, and the King of France isolated.

This scheme with regard to Venice recalls the amazing expedition of Louis XI., as Dauphin, when he collected those terrible mercenaries, " écorcheurs,"

from all over France which was being eaten up by them, and led them across the land to " fight the Swiss, or at least to be left behind outside the frontier."

It was a curious coincidence that when Ferramosca arrived in Rome with proposals to conclude the war, Guillaume du Bellay came from François I., to urge its more vigorous continuance. For some days the Pope remained in a state of miserable anxiety, divided between his fears and his hatreds ; and after first inclining to one side and then to the other, he suddenly concluded another treaty on March 15. Instead of the 200,000 ducats, he was now only required to pay 60,000 (which would of course be absolutely insufficient to pay the landsknechte and send them home !), and he was not required to yield the citadels of Ostia and Civita Vecchia, as pledges of his good faith. It was all very well for Clement VII. to sign treaties one day and break them the next, but it was quite another matter to induce the great unpaid army of Bourbon and Frundsberg to accept this most unprofitable peace. The very day before it was signed in Rome, there had been a most alarming mutiny in the Imperial camp. Mignet says that the Spaniards gave the signal of rebellion, but Guicciardini attributes it to the Germans.

" Bourbon was waiting to begin his march, for the coming of provisions, ammunition, and oxen to draw the four cannons which, so far, composed all his artillery." These had come from the Duke of Ferrara, whose hatred of the Pope was so great that he would gladly have poisoned him, and who used all his per-

suasion to induce Bourbon to march on Rome. The Spaniards, driven to desperation by the hardships they had endured, rushed towards the Duke's tent, reclaiming their pay, and threatening to kill him; indeed we are told that he only owed his safety to flight. They pillaged everything they could lay hands on, and murdered one of his gentlemen. He made his escape into the quarter of the Germans, in Frundsberg's tent, but the landsknechte also had risen in revolt, and shouted with fury: "Give us money! Give us money!"

In vain the veteran leader, Georg von Frundsberg who had trained and led them to victory, harangued the half-mad soldiery, and sought to appease them. He called them his children, implored them to serve the Emperor with docility, and to wait patiently for their pay which they should receive as soon as it could be paid. He spoke in those tones of authority and persuasion which had never failed to meet with ready obedience, but, to his horror and dismay, the tumult continued, and he could not even gain a hearing. Never before had his commands been questioned; a great noble in his own country, Prince of Mindelheim, the most experienced captain of a splendid soldiery, he had ever been treated with the respect and honour which his high position deserved.

The shock of that awful moment when he found himself powerless to rule his faithful landsknechte, was too much for Georg von Frundsberg; his words failed, he lost consciousness, and fell back upon a drum, suddenly stricken with apoplexy. Awakened too late

to the result of their rebellion, his soldiers in consternation and remorse bore their loved general on a litter to Ferrara, where he received every care, but there was no hope of recovery. This grand old man, of splendid stature and extraordinary strength must have been at this time over eighty years of age, if we accept the record of his birth at Mindelheim, on September 24, 1443. We can only marvel that he should have endured the severity of that bitter journey over the wintry Alps and the terrible hardships of the Camp before San Giovanni.

It was an alarming position for the Duc de Bourbon, but he never lost his courage and presence of mind. He came to an understanding with the rebellious troops, and with the help of a small loan from the Duke of Ferrara, he gave a ducat to each soldier, promising to lead his army forward at once to the conquest of Florence or Rome, where they would gain honour and glory, and recover more than the arrears of their pay. Twelve leaders were elected by the Germans from their own number, who were to look after their interests and be responsible for their obedience, under the orders of Bourbon. This was the state of affairs in the camp, when the next day, Cesare Ferramosca the Imperial envoy, arrived in their midst, bringing the Treaty that was to stop their farther progress into central Italy, and by which the sum of 60,000 ducats was to cover all their expenses and liabilities. Can we wonder that this news was received with loud murmurs, and the utmost dismay? As Ferramosca wrote in his letter of April 4; "When I

arrived with the peace, they seemed as furious as lions."

To look at the matter for a moment from the soldiers' point of view, we must remember that the German contingent had been quite six months in the field, suffering extraordinary hardships, with practically no pay whatever. It was now April, and at Christmas, we learn in a letter to the Emperor, at least 100,000 ducats were due to them. They had been half-starved for some time, their clothes were in rags, and their shoes were worn out. When sheep or oxen were brought into the camp for food, the first demand of the men was for the skins, to make rude coverings for their torn and lacerated feet. Besides the landsknechte, there were five or six thousand Spanish troops, who had received no pay since they left Milan on January 2, and who were in the same evil case; there was the constant expense of feeding all that army, the horses of the cavalry and of the baggage wagons; the money borrowed from the Duke of Ferrara and others was owing, and there were endless expenses.

Bourbon explained all this to Ferramosca, almost with violence, and finally declared that it would be impossible for him to persuade his men to so tremendous a sacrifice, but that he would support the Emperor's ambassador in doing so. All the captains and leaders were summoned, and listened to the agruments of the Envoy. He pointed out the importance of this Treaty, and the immense difficulties of the enterprise on which their hearts were set. In vain Ferramosca dwelt upon the arid and poverty-

stricken districts they would have to cross, without money and without provisions ; he ridiculed the idea of hoping with four small cannons to batter down the walls of cities well defended by solid ramparts and strong garrisons. But his words fell upon the empty air, for the captains retired with an absolute refusal to listen to any of his proposals. As for the soldiers, they were furious when they heard of the ambassador's suggestions, and vowed to kill him, in their blind rage. Fortunately, he was warned in time, and borrowing a swift horse from Ferrante Gonzaga, he saved his life by instant flight.

The Duc de Bourbon now addressed the combined army of Germans and Spaniards with a formal enquiry as to their wishes. " We desire to march forward," was the reply. " And I will go with you," he added. It was settled that the move should take place on the morrow.

The Marquess del Vasto, the gallant nephew of Pescara, who was Captain-General of the Spanish troops, refused to accompany the army, notwithstanding all Bourbon's entreaties. " Have you not the Emperor's order to obey my commands ? " he asked. " Shall I give you written instructions ? "

" But you are not carrying out his wishes, and I can no longer obey you," was the reply, and the Marquess del Vasto, giving up his position, retired to Ferrara.

The loss of the veteran Frundsberg had been a terrible blow to the Duc de Bourbon, upon whom now rested the whole responsibility for these bands of

fierce adventurers, driven to exasperation by their miserable plight. The desertion of his post at the last moment by the Marquess del Vasto, completed the isolation of the leader, on whom now rested the whole burden of restraining that motley host. From early youth, the life of Charles de Bourbon had been a sad and solitary one, overshadowed by the loss of his brave father Gilbert de Montpensier, his brother Louis, and of his mother Chiara ever homesick for her Mantuan birthplace. Then for a while Fortune smiled upon him, and he had found rest and peace in the devoted affection of his gentle wife Suzanne and his second mother, Anne de France ; only to be left, by their death, for ever lonely . . . amid his cruel wrongs.

In the portraits of Bourbon, we are struck by the stern look of proud reserve, tempered by the melancholy expression of the dark eyes with their haunting shadows. A few faithful friends had followed his fortunes from France when he rebelled against François I., and they remained devoted to the bitter end ; but there was no one near and dear enough to pierce through the stern isolation in which his haughty spirit dwelt.

He seeks no sympathy, he asks for no advice ; indeed the time for hesitation has long passed by. Of his princely wealth and vast possession, nothing is left to him now but his sword, and with that he must carve a way for this great destitute army which has placed its trust in him. Was any other course possible for Bourbon at this moment, but to lead his soldiers on

to battle and conquest? Even his worst enemies would own that now—when nothing could shake the desperate host in its purpose to advance—for the leader to forsake his post like the Marquess del Vasto, would be the last depth of dishonour. It was unthinkable that this half barbarian army should be suffered to ravage and plunder all Italy, with no controlling power to check it until, without guidance, restraint or discipline, it should be in turn destroyed.

Bourbon was no longer a free agent; he was carried on by the resistless force of a mighty flood which he had no power to resist, for the one command which every man in his army would have disobeyed was . . . the order to retreat. It was on March 30, 1527, that the Imperial troops set forth towards Romagna, having received from Alfonso of Ferrara, a small supply of provisions and ammunition. Travelling was rendered difficult, as the heavy rains had swollen the rivers; Imola and Forlì were protected by a sudden advance of the Marquess de Saluces from Bologna, and the army of Bourbon was only able to enter open places like Lugo and Cotignola. In the midst of great suffering and extreme privation, the troops had to cross the highest and roughest passes of the Apennines, in order to descend upon the rich plain of Florence.

With ever-increasing terror, the Pope heard of this advance. He was indignant beyond measure that his offer of 60,000 ducats should have been refused, and sent in haste for Lannoy, the Viceroy of Naples, that he might insist upon these terms being carried

out, and that this terrible army should retreat at once. Lannoy was willing to make another attempt where Cesare Ferramosca had so utterly failed; but he pointed out to the Pope that the 60,000 ducats must be increased to at least 150,000, if there was to be any hope of success. As the money could not be raised at once in Rome, Lannoy went to Florence with a steward of Clement VII., and remained ten days to negotiate a loan there, at any price, even by selling the silver vases of the churches. As the Pope was always passing from the depths to the height of confidence, he now felt sure that the Imperial army would retreat, and actually disbanded the greater part of the troops which remained to him.

Meantime Bourbon was rapidly moving across the eastern slopes of the Apennines, amid snow fields where his men suffered terribly from cold and hunger. All this misery and extra labour was being added to the account due to them, and the sum which might have satisfied them several weeks ago, proved to be now quite insufficient. The Florentine deputies were on their way with 100,000 ducats, when on Easter day, April 21, between Arezzo and Montevarchi, the Viceroy of Naples came in touch with the great army which it was his mission to satisfy and dismiss on their homeward way. But the behaviour of Lannoy on this occasion, shows in the most striking way the difficulty of coming to terms, by money payment, with these rough soldiers, now full of eager hope and expectation, with Rome and Florence near at hand.

From all the many letters preserved and from

contemporary evidence, it remains an absolute fact that the Viceroy, the trusted servant of the Emperor and in his full confidence, remained several days in the camp and did *nothing* to persuade the army to such moderation and obedience as would have made them agree to the last Treaty with the Pope. This was certainly not from friendship for Bourbon, with whom Lannoy had always been on terms of jealous rivalry; it may have been from fear of his own personal safety. In any case he forwarded to Clement VII., the last demand of the army through Bourbon, for 240,000 ducats, and he then retired to Siena to await events.

Bourbon and the army, of which he may rather be called the prisoner than the leader, continued to follow the Val d'Arno, till they arrived at the little town of San Giovanni, about thirty miles from Florence. It was a most fortunate thing for that splendid city of the Medici, that the army of the League commanded by the Marquess de Saluces, and the Venetian portion of it led by the Duke of Urbino, arrived within reach, from two different directions. It was a curious coincidence that on this very day, the Cardinal of Cortona envoy of the Pope, and Ippolyto dei Medici his nephew, having hastened out of Florence to meet the Duke of Urbino, their departure was looked upon as a flight, and a popular rebellion at once broke out against the ruling family of the Medici. This, however, was only a futile prelude of the later revolution against that powerful house. The Cardinal of Cortona returned to the city with the Duke of Urbino, the Marquess de

Saluces and their troops; and the Florentines, only too thankful for this protection, broke the agreement they had made with Clement VII., and once more heartily joined the League.

As for the Pope himself, we can only record his actions, which it is quite impossible to account for. Two days previously, on April 25, he had again signed another treaty, in the presence of the English ambassadors, and once more returned to the Holy League, which he had so often joined and as often deserted. This time he demanded 30,000 ducats to be paid monthly by the King of France and the State of Venice, 15,000 ducats and 3500 foot-soldiers from the King of England, and the combined armies of the League were to come at once and protect him against the Imperial army. On his part he promised to excommunicate the Emperor, to release all his subjects from their oath of allegiance, to declare that he had forfeited all rights to the Kingdom of Naples which was to be invaded by sea and land; finally, the Pope had not too much sense of humour to promise that "never again would he make a separate alliance with him." Much relieved by making another treaty, Clement VII. now awaited help, without taking any steps to defend himself against the danger which threatened him.

The prompt defence of Florence had the effect of driving the Imperial army upon Rome. Leaving San-Giovanni, Bourbon turned from the valley of the Arno to the Ambro, in the direction of Siena, where provisions had been offered to the Imperial troops;

Brogi, photo.

POPE CLEMENT VII AND THE EMPEROR CHARLES V
By Vasari. (Panel in Palazzo Vecchio, Florence)

then by forced marches, continued his advance towards the Eternal city, trusting to surprise it by the rapidity of his movements. On May 1 he had passed out of the territory of Siena into that of the Church, and was travelling at the rate of fifteen or twenty miles a day, with one fixed object set before him and his dauntless host, the taking of Rome !

It is impossible to prove how far Bourbon was carrying out the will of the Emperor, but we have no evidence of any orders being sent from Spain to prevent this attack on Rome. On January 26, 1527, Charles V. received a letter from his confidential secretary in Rome, Juan Perez, which distinctly states that " Bourbon will not be able to give his troops other pay than the sack of Rome and of Florence." And he is again informed by Alonzo Sanchez that " Bourbon is marching on Rome in hurried journeys." If the Emperor had given positive orders to his lieutenants, he would certainly have checked the advance of Bourbon. That curious incident of Lannoy's arrival at the camp below the Apennines—when he took no step whatever to discourage Bourbon or the army in their course, and only sent on to the Pope the demand for 240,000 ducats without a word of remonstrance—appears conclusive. We cannot forget that after the Colonna raid, the chief anxiety of Moncada, in writing to the Emperor was—" that he should *profess* the greatest sorrow and dismay at what had occurred."

The Emperor had nothing to lose by this adventure ; indeed he had everything to gain. Knowing what a

splendid general Bourbon was, and the desperate courage of that fanatical host, to whom success was a sheer necessity, a matter of life or death—Charles V. may well have been secure of their victory. No one could have foreseen the actual and most terrible result, when the death of Bourbon left the Eternal City in the power of a horde of barbarians, unrestrained by his authority.

There is something stirring and magnificent, as mere warfare, in that swift march through the hot central plains of Italy, between Umbria and the Maremma. The army advanced with extraordinary rapidity; inspired by the indomitable spirit of their leader, the soldiers endured hunger and fatigue, and tramped on uncomplaining through arid plains and fever swamps. Nothing could stop their resistless course. When they reached the river Paglia, greatly swollen by rapid torrents, it was necessary to ford it, not far from Acquadente. "Bourbon arranged his foot-soldiers in files of thirty or forty, with their arms interlaced, who were to thus wade across, while the cavalry, taking the ford a little higher, somewhat broke the force of the current. The water came up to the chest and sometimes to the chin; if the rush of the torrent was too strong, and a man lost his footing entirely, his companions were not to risk their own safety, but to close up without him, as farther down some chosen landsknechte of special strength and courage would come to his help. In this manner the stream was crossed without much loss, for the horsemen were in less danger."

The army was travelling through a hostile country, and when the little hill town of Montifiascone unwisely refused the right of passage and provisions, we cannot wonder that it was pillaged, and no doubt the soldiers refreshed themselves well with the famous wine. Viterbo showed more discretion, but Ronciglione twelve miles farther, on a hill at the margin of the Campagna, refused to supply food, and shared the fate of Montifiascone. The English Ambassador, Gregorio Casale, thus writes to tell how the news came to Rome on May 2, 1527 :—

" This night letters were brought by a peasant on foot, to say that the lord Scciara Colonna with sixty light horsemen came to the walls of Viterbo, to ask the rulers of the town to give them passage and provisions ; and the said Scciara said that the rest of the camp was at Acquapendente and at Montifiascone, which thing has greatly astonished the Holiness of our Lord." Casale writes again the next day : " I have been to see His Holiness early this morning. . . . It is almost impossible to describe to you the state of terror in which the Pope is ; but I promise you that I have done all I possibly can to encourage him. . . . He wished to send Renzo da Ceri to raise 1000 foot-soldiers, but he could not by any means find 1000 crowns to pay them . . . therefore I have sent to pledge all the silver vessels, chains, jewels, and rings which were in my house. . . . May 3, . . . I have also done my best to persuade His Holiness to make new Cardinals which he has decided to do to-day. . . ."

Amongst the five Cardinals appointed at a price of 40,000 ducats each, was Ercole Gonzaga, brother of Ferrante Gonzaga in Bourbon's army, and son of that determined lady Isabella d'Este, who had stayed in Rome for months to obtain this " red hat," and who also at this critical moment, sent a messenger to her son, Ferrante, and her nephew, the Duc de Bourbon, requesting them to protect her house if they took the city. This they promised to do, bidding her fortify and provision it. Her cool talent for attaining her ends almost amounted to genius.

When Clement VII. had set his mind at rest by signing on April 25 another Treaty, in which he returned to the League and promised to excommunicate the Emperor and utterly destroy his power, he took no steps to protect himself from the Imperial army which was advancing so rapidly to his very gates. Not until he received the letter which I have quoted, announcing that the army was under the walls of Viterbo, did he send for Renzo da Ceri, who had just returned from the Abruzzi, and ask him to raise some foot-soldiers. This captain, who had been so successful in the defence of Marseilles, seems to have had an inadequate idea of the present danger, but he collected three or four thousand men, some of them disbanded soldiers ; others were taken from the shops of Rome and the stables of the Cardinals, while the rest were artisans and servants, with no knowledge of war or of discipline. They were placed in defence of the walls of the Borgo and of the Trastevere, which Renzo caused to be hastily repaired at several points where they

were crumbling away from age, and guns were set in position. This appears to have been the only preparation made to receive the army of Bourbon, which on Sunday, May 5, reached at length the summit of Monte Mario, the northern height of the range of hills forming the Janiculus.

We can picture to ourselves the glorious view spread out before that weary host, as with eager eyes they gazed upon the domes and campaniles, the fortress-like palaces, the narrow streets, dominated by the ancient Pantheon and the fortress of the Coliseum; the Eternal city, rising majestic on both banks of the Tiber—the aim of their painful journey, the fulfilment of their wildest hopes. To the Lutherans, in their stern fanaticism, it was the "city of abomination," which their teacher had once visited as a pious pilgrim, and then denounced with such fiery zeal. To the Spaniards and Italians, it may have brought vague memories as the Sanctuary of their Faith, but we may feel assured that for that great army of mercenaries, all other thoughts were absorbed in the hope of pillage and plenty, after those long months of famine and wretchedness.

In this war against the Pope, we do not find any one troubled by the thought of sacrilege. He who takes up the sword accepts the risk of the sword; if the Pope as a Temporal Sovereign makes war, he must be subject to the laws of war. The heart of Bourbon was full of bitterness against this Clement VII., who, as Head of the Church, had not only advised François I. to break the solemn covenant by which all the dominions

and rights of the Duke would have been restored to him, but also gave the French King, Papal absolution for this cruel breach of faith and honour. The conquest of Rome would be a just revenge for such far-reaching treachery. Clement VII. could not even play the game of war fairly ; his constant making and breaking of treaties had made him the jest of Europe, and was bringing upon him the coming destruction which he so richly deserved.

It was towards the evening of that eventful Sunday, May 5, when Bourbon gave orders for the army to descend from Monte Mario, across the meadows towards the Vatican Hill, near the quarter of the Borgo and the Trastevere. Had it been possible, he would have attacked the city that night for, as he pointed out to his captains, they had only provisions for two days and, " when fortune gives us an opportunity, if we do not seize it, all may be lost." But the men were worn out with fatigue, and it was decided to wait till the morrow. The camp was pitched outside the walls between the Porta San Pancrazio and the Porta Santo Spirito ; and when the city was alight with the fiery glow of sunset, Bourbon made his last stirring appeal to his army. By the memory of all they had endured and suffered in that long and terrible journey, he called upon his friends, the captains and the men, to show " their courage, their virtue, and their indomitable strength," now that the hour of triumph had arrived when the enemies of the Emperor would be stricken to the heart. For victory must be with them ; not merely their honour and glory, their coming

wealth and great reputation, depended upon success, but even their very existence. By every possible means he sought to rouse their devotion, their courage, and their enthusiasm, until he had inspired them with his own ardent spirit.

All that night was spent by Bourbon in arranging with his lieutenants every detail of his plan of siege. the moment and the place when it should begin ; nothing was left to chance. While some of the troops slept, others watched ; ladders were made for scaling the walls, the arquebuses were put in good order, the pikes and swords made ready under the starlight sky, when the dark walls and the great shadowy mass of Saint-Angelo looked even more formidable than by daylight.

The attack of Rome was no easy matter. Mignet thus describes its position. " Crossed by the Tiber from the north-east to the south-west, the city was composed of three unequal parts, in a way independent of each other. From the right bank of the river, as far as the external slopes of the Vatican and the Janiculum, there were spread out in front of the Imperial army, the Borgo and the Trastevere, almost forming two separate cities protected by continuous enclosures, of which the walls would have to be forced one after the other. The Borgo, also called the Leonine City, placed on the left of the besiegers, and within which was the Pontifical palace and the great Apostolic Church of St Peter's, was flanked on one side by the Castle of Sant'Angelo and closed on the other by the fairly well-protected gates of Torrione and Santo-Spirito. To

take this by one fortunate assault would not be sufficient. It was necessary afterwards to scale the ramparts of the Trastevere, which the Imperial army had to the right, and of which they could not break down without cannon the two gates Settimiana and San Pancrazio; one turned towards the Borgo and the other opening into the Campania. When the Borgo and the Trastevere are taken, it would still be needful to penetrate into the vast and ancient city of the Forum, the Capitol, the Palatine and the Quirinal, which, surrounded by ramparts and towers, stretches along the right bank of the Tiber, broad and deep at this part. This was only reached from the Borgo and from the Trastevere by three bridges, easy to destroy or to defend. Three successive attacks would thus be necessary, and, as it were, three sieges in order to take possession of Rome."

Before dawn, on May 6, the Imperial army set forth towards the Borgo, whose low ramparts were to be attacked from three points, and Bourbon had chosen the three attacking columns from the soldiers of different nations—Spanish, German, and Italian—in order to excite their emulation.[1]

We see the Duc de Bourbon riding forth at the head of his troops—a splendid figure in full armour, with plumed helmet, and a surcoat of cloth of silver worn outside his cuirass; a mark for every foe, but above all, a shining light to guide and lead his soldiers from afar. Erect, stern of mien, and alert in every move-

[1] Montrichard tells us that before starting, "le Seigneur de' Bourbon se confessa et ouyt la messe avec grande dévotion."

ment with proud confidence, he was followed with enthusiasm, alike by captains and men. He gave the order of attack, and the firing began between the Spanish arquebusiers and those of the Pope who defended the ramparts. The artillery from the Castle Sant'Angelo joined in and kept up such a sustained fire that the besiegers were somewhat driven back. With the rising sun, a thick mist was drawn up from the plain, and this gave an opportunity for the Imperial troops to approach the walls for an assault.

The Duc de Bourbon set the example to his men; he sprang from his horse, seized a ladder, and beckoning to the Spaniards to follow him, he advanced boldly to the western wall of the Borgo, between the Porta Torrione and the Porta Santo-Spirito. He had scarcely begun to scale the wall before he was struck in the right groin by the shot from an arquebus, which went through his body, and he fell, mortally wounded. Various accounts are given of his death; some say that the Duke was killed on the spot, but others relate that he was carried to a little chapel near, and lingered for almost an hour. This is rendered probable by a letter from his chaplain to the Emperor, written in June 1527,[1] "by which Monseigneur de Bourbon sends a last pathetic message of loyalty to His Majesty, in whom he trusted to set right any disorders which might happen after his death, . . . and he besought the Emperor when he should make peace with the King of France, to include his nephew, heir to the estates of Bourbon (the Prince de la Roche-sur-Yon), and all

[1] Preserved in the Imperial Archives of Vienna.

his gentlemen, servitors and officers. . . ." The great anxiety of the Duc de Bourbon was always, to his last hour, that his friends and adherents should not suffer for their loyalty to him.

Thus fell in the hour of triumph, the greatest general and the most striking figure of the Renaissance. At the age of thirty-seven, the tragedy of his life had closed.

Meantime the assault had been carried on with the most desperate fury by the soldiers now led by the Prince of Orange ; the rumour of their great leader's mortal wound had roused in them a fury of revenge, and with shouts of " Carne ! Carne ! sangre ! sangre ! cierra ! cierra ! Bourbon ! Bourbon," they hurled themselves upon the defenders, and gained the ramparts in spite of a very hail of bullets, of flaming torches, of stones, and of boiling pitch. . . . The first banners planted on the walls were taken by Renzo da Ceri ; but the besiegers poured in on every side, and drove the Romans before them through the Borgo, pursuing them with tumult and bloodthirsty fighting to the very foot of the fortress of Sant'Angelo, which was only just closed in time by dropping the portcullis.

Clement VII. had but that moment reached the Castle by the private gallery leading from the Vatican ; Paolo Giovio holding up the Papal train while they both ran at full speed, followed by a number of Cardinals and Court officials. One Cardinal arriving after the gate had been closed, was drawn up in a basket, while another was saved from the fighting, struggling crowd, by being pushed in through a window. The Pope believed this fortress to be

impregnable, and now finding himself in the midst of ambassadors, cardinals, and prelates, he recovered his spirits enough to suggest making another treaty. But from this he was dissuaded with some difficulty, as it was pointed out that the Imperial army, deprived of a leader by the death of Bourbon, was less to be feared, and also that a company under Renzo da Ceri was still defending the right bank of the Tiber. But this captain was unable to induce the Romans to help him by cutting the two bridges, Ponte Quattro Capi (the ancient Fons Fabricius), and the Ponte Sisto (built about sixty years before by Sixtus IV., and from which the Popes took the title of Pontifex, bridge-builder). The people refused to sacrifice their bridges, for the insufficient reason, in that time of peril, that they were "too beautiful."

It was afternoon when the Imperial army, commanded by the Prince of Orange, advanced to the attack of the Trastevere, down the steep crest of the Janiculan thickly planted with trees and interlaced with vines. The wall which extends from the Porta San-Pancrazio to the Porta Settimiana was vigourously assailed, and overcome with panic, the defenders fled, leaving the quarter to the landsknechte and the Spaniards who, fearing some trap, marched on in serried bands to the Ponte Sisto, where they met with no resistance, the strong oaken gates not being even closed. They crossed the Tiber, to the sound of drums and trumpets, and slowly advanced into Rome, camping that night in the Piazza Navona and the Campo de' Fiori. The next day the soldiers cast off all

bounds, and spreading through the city, now entirely at their mercy, began that awful Sack of Rome of which it is impossible to realize the full horrors. "Like a pack of wolves they rushed on the defenceless people. . . . The Spaniards excelled in deliberate cruelty. . . . The Lutherans desecrated the churches and rejoiced to burn and defile what the world had adored."

The death of the Duc de Bourbon, in the very moment of victory, was the worst misfortune which could have befallen the conquered city. He alone could have restrained that horde of fierce, half-starved mercenaries, and like another Alaric, have stayed their hands by securing the payment of a sufficient ransom. There was no help on any side. In the midst of the universal devastation, the Holy Father, a prisoner in the Vatican, did nothing but pour out tears and lamentations in the midst of his Cardinals. He waited in vain for the army of the League under the Duke of Urbino, who approached the city only to turn away and declare all relief impossible. "Never was there a more protracted and more ruinous pillage," and on all the unspeakable horrors with which it was accompanied, we leave it for others to dwell." [1]

With the death of Charles, Duc de Bourbon, our story ends; and we only allude to these after events because, by the irony of fate, upon his memory has been cast all the obloquy for that which only his life

[1] As, for instance, Jacques Buonaparte in the "Sac de Rome," giving all the terrible details.

could have prevented. In the coming days, when the Emperor Charles V. had become, in great measure through this triumphant conquest of Rome, the most powerful sovereign in Europe; no one could venture to accuse His Pious and Imperial Majesty of the sacrilegious crime which had shocked all Christendom. A scapegoat was at hand, and Bourbon was made responsible for everything; the more readily as he was dead, and neither blame nor praise would concern him any more.

In France, his trial was still continued, and it reads like a solemn farce to the end. On July 26, 1527, in the presence of King François I., on his seat of justice, assisted by the Peers of France and the assembled Chambers, Jean de Surie, first Usher of the Court, called Charles de Bourbon three times—at the bar of the Parliament, at the marble table, and at the marble steps—and then reported that the said de Bourbon had not appeared. The sentence was drawn up, then solemnly read out: "The Connétable de France, dead, was condemned, his goods returned to the Crown . . . and the door of his palace by the Louvre was painted yellow. . . ."

"Desta maniera," says Sandoval, "se vengaron en la muerte de quien no pudieron en vida."

"Consiliis Calchas,
animo Hector,
robore Achilles
eloquio Nestor,
Jacet hic Borbonius heros."[1]

[1] Contemporary Epitaph.

GENEALOGICAL TABLES

TABLE I.—HOUSE OF BOURBON.

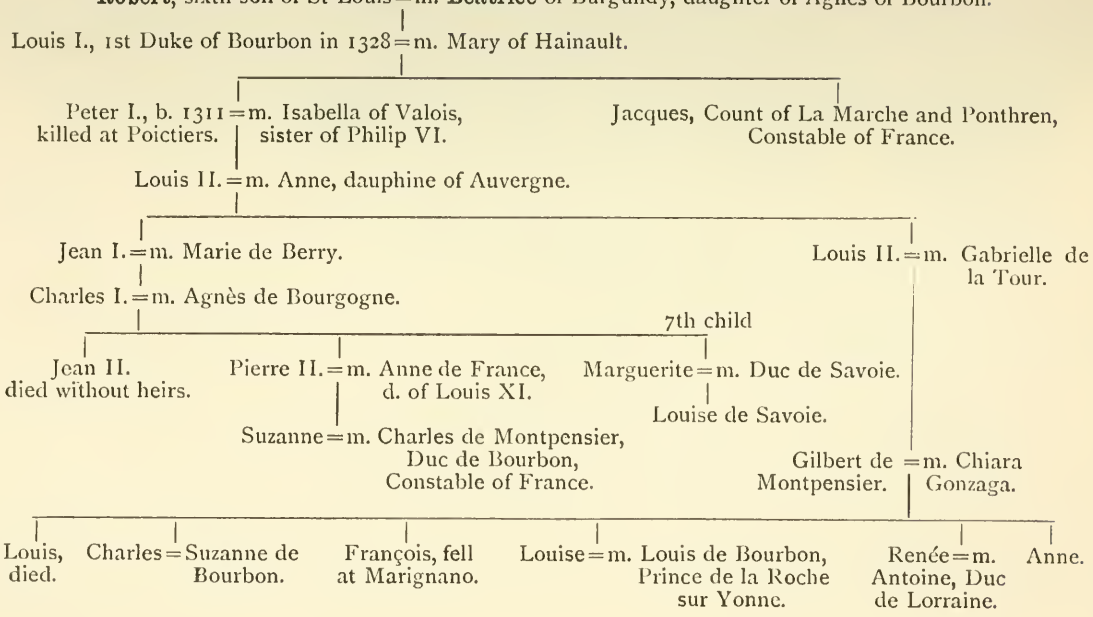

Robert, sixth son of St Louis = m. **Beatrice** of Burgundy, daughter of Agnes of Bourbon.
Louis I., 1st Duke of Bourbon in 1328 = m. Mary of Hainault.
Peter I., b. 1311 = m. Isabella of Valois, sister of Philip VI.
killed at Poictiers.
Jacques, Count of La Marche and Ponthren, Constable of France.
Louis II. = m. Anne, dauphine of Auvergne.
Jean I. = m. Marie de Berry.
Louis II. = m. Gabrielle de la Tour.
Charles I. = m. Agnès de Bourgogne.
7th child
Jean II. died without heirs.
Pierre II. = m. Anne de France, d. of Louis XI.
Marguerite = m. Duc de Savoie.
Louise de Savoie.
Suzanne = m. Charles de Montpensier, Duc de Bourbon, Constable of France.
Gilbert de Montpensier. = m. Chiara Gonzaga.
Louis, died.
Charles = Suzanne de Bourbon.
François, fell at Marignano.
Louise = m. Louis de Bourbon, Prince de la Roche sur Yonne.
Renée = m. Antoine, Duc de Lorraine.
Anne.

TABLE II.—HOUSE OF BOURBON.

(*Showing the claim of Louise de Savoie.*)

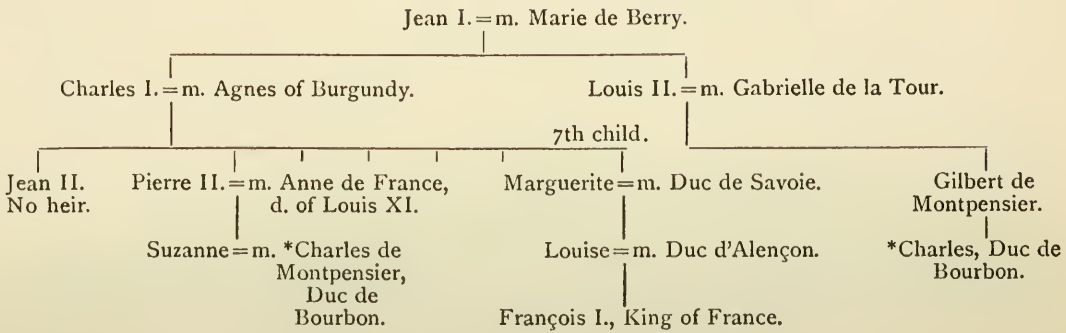
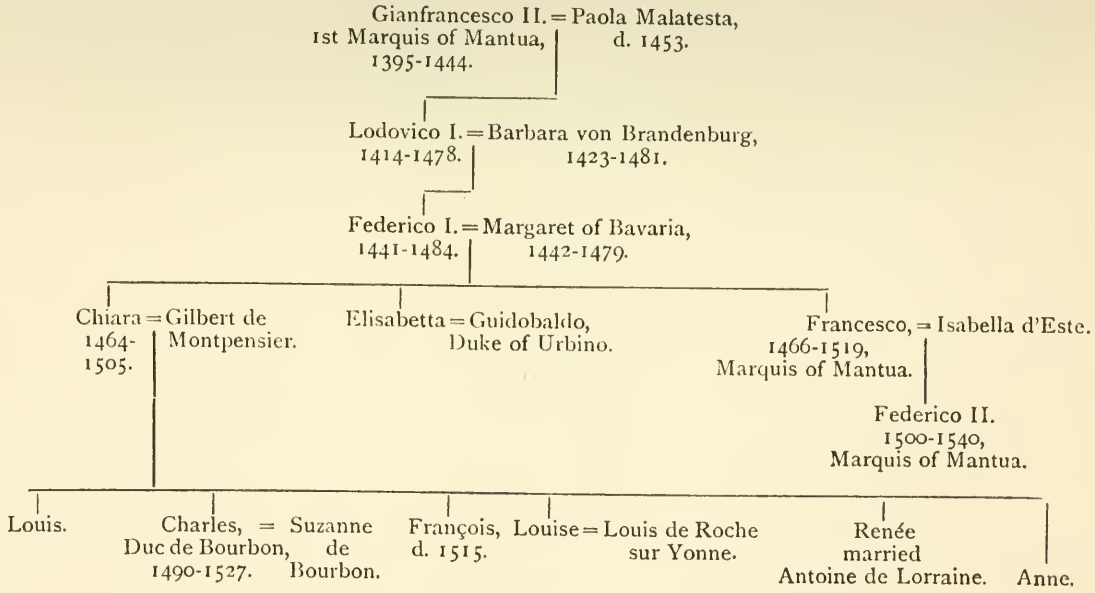


TABLE III.—HOUSE OF GONZAGA.



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List of such of the most valuable original *letters of the Duc de Bourbon, alluded to in this work, as are now in the* British Museum.

1516. Milan. He talks of "Susanne, ma femme" (partly burnt). Signed: C. Bourbon.

January 18, 1523. Genoa. Charles de Bourbon writes to the Comte de Ponthièvre, signifying that he has entered into the service of the Emperor. (Original French.)

May 12, 1523. Annécy. Writes to Cardinal Wolsey, with credentials in favour of M. de Chateaufort. (French.)

September 1523. Instructions of the Duc de Bourbon to M. du Reux, sent to England.

St George. *March* 30, 1524. Duc de Bourbon to Comte de Ponthièvre, with intelligence about his proceedings.

Aigues. *September* 13, 1523. Duc de Bourbon writes to Cardinal Wolsey, thanking him for his good offices.

Montcallier. *June* 16, 1524. Bourbon, Lannoy and Adrien de Croy write to Cardinal Wolsey desiring assistance.

—— *June* 16, 1524. Bourbon, Lannoy and de Croy write to Henry VIII. about the needful preparations for invading France.

(Richard Pace writes to Cardinal Wolsey about the Duc de Bourbon's objection to take the oath of allegiance to Henry VIII. On the top is written: nota hec mysteria. Montcallier. June 16).

Instruction to Richard Pace to demand a positive answer from the Duc de Bourbon.

CAMP BEFORE MARSEILLES. *September* 19, 1524. The Duc de Bourbon writes to Cardinal Wolsey imploring the promised help.

CAMP BEFORE MARSEILLES. Duc de Bourbon writes to Henry VIII. desiring him to advance with his army as the only hope.

NICE. *October* 5, 1524. To Henry VIII. on his return from Provence, showing that the siege of Marseilles had failed for want of the promised help.

—— 1524. Instructions from the Duc de Bourbon about the war in Italy. Milan has surrendered. (Spanish.)

PAVIA. *October* 24, 1524. Charles de Bourbon and Adrien de Croy write to negotiate with the English ambassador about a subsidy from Henry VIII. to invade France.

TRENT. *January* 5, 1525. Duc de Bourbon to Henry VIII. once more urging the importance of invading France.

GENOA. *January* 18, 1525. Duc de Bourbon informs Henry VIII. that he has been appointed by the Emperor Lieutenant-General in Lombardy.

CAMP DE LA MOTHE. Duc de Bourbon writes to the Bishop of Bath about a meeting with Henry VIII.

MILAN. *March* 10, 1525. Duc de Bourbon writes to Henry VIII. concerning the victory of Pavia.

MILAN. *March* 24, 1525. The Duc de Bourbon writes to the Cardinal dei Medici about the safety of the Pope's dominions.

MILAN. *July* 6, 1525. The Duc de Bourbon writes to Henry VIII. to announce that the Emperor had sent for him.

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